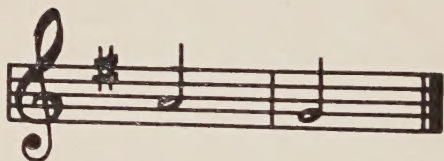



24

ASHER
GOLDENBERG



EX LIBRIS

YOU CAN SING



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation



Frontispiece]

CLARA NOVELLO DAVIES

YOU CAN SING

by

CLARA NOVELLO DAVIES

With a Foreword by

The Rt. Hon.


THE EARL OF PLYMOUTH

LONDON :

SEELWYN & BLOUNT (1928) LTD.

34, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.4

Made and Printed in Great Britain
The Gainsborough Press, St. Albans. Fisher, Knight & Co., Ltd.



DEDICATED TO
MY SON
IVOR NOVELLO

146690



FOREWORD

SINGING has such a high and undisputed position—unexcelled as an art to study, as a source of pleasure, and as a bond of goodwill—that an illuminating book on this great subject is one which must be welcomed and be gladly assigned a lasting place in the shelves by all who care for art and for the interests and traditions of their country.

Though I can lay no claim to speak with authority on the subject matter of Madame Clara Novello Davies's book, "You Can Sing", I can bear some testimony to the great work which the authoress has done for the art of singing throughout her life, and I am very glad, for many reasons, to have the opportunity to do this.

For many years she was a close friend of my father, and, when my father died, that friendship passed on to me. The pleasure of my task is further increased, for we have an additional

FOREWORD

link between us in that both our families have for long been intimately associated with the little village of St. Fagan's, situated about a mile from Cardiff, yet until recently as peaceful as if it had been in the heart of Wales. And it is Wales which means almost more than anything else to Madame—Wales for which she has worked and for which she has done so much.

The life of Madame Clara Novello Davies has been a very full and active one, and I doubt whether any other teacher of singing has such a truly international reputation as she has.

She founded and conducted the Royal Welsh Ladies' Choir, the members of which were all pupils taught and trained by her. It is in the realm of the teaching of singing in Wales that we owe her very special thanks. All lovers of Wales are anxious to encourage the speaking and knowledge of the beautiful Welsh language, and, as the Welsh are a very musical people, there could be no better way of attaining that end than through the medium of singing.

In 1895 she took her choir to the World's

FOREWORD

Fair at Chicago, where she won many first prizes. She proved herself indeed a pioneer, for this was the first time in the history of the British Isles that a choir was taken from this country to America.

On her return, in 1894, Madame Clara Novello Davies and her choir received a command to sing before Queen Victoria at Osborne.

It is hardly necessary to recall to those who know Madame Clara Novello Davies that during the period of the War her activities were directed towards the relief of distress and the provision of amenities for the troops and prisoners of war. As in war, so in peace, Madame is ever warm-hearted and charitable, and many charitable organizations have from time to time derived benefit from her work.

Madame Novello Davies and her choir have sung before many members of the Royal Family, and in 1918 she received the honour of her second royal command performance—on this occasion before our present King and Queen at Windsor.

Madame, who is the proud mother of Ivor

FOREWORD

Novello, the brilliant composer, actor, and playwright, has among her pupils many distinguished artists in every corner of the earth, and she has truly rendered a service to the world by her international teaching of singing and conducting.

I have mentioned but a few episodes in a crowded life, but I think I have said enough to show how fully and completely qualified the authoress is to write on this great subject and to give us the benefit of her wonderful experience.

I heartily commend this book to the public, and sincerely hope that it will achieve the success which it deserves.

(Signed) PLYMOUTH.

INTRODUCTION

“ALL THAT HATH LIFE AND BREATH SING TO THE
LORD”

It is the purpose of this little book to enable those who read and study its pages—to *sing*. It is written with the definite purpose of encouraging, enlightening, and reassuring those who do not believe that they can ever sing—to *sing and sing well*.

My method is the fruit of forty years of teaching experience, during which period I have given thousands of lessons, gaining knowledge myself from a life spent in imparting it to others.

Looking back, it seems to me that all the forces producing good results are directed absolutely by the *mind*. I have thought it best to state the results of my experience in this direction as simply and concisely as possible. Where statements are repeated, it is done deliberately, for “Repetition is the handmaid of learning”.

INTRODUCTION

The cultivation of thought-power, together with the practice of the breathing exercises, will give the power to gain control over the body. And in proportion, as you generate thought-power in the theory and practice of my system, you will be enabled to attain your desires.

Some of my pupils have been totally unable to reproduce a given sound at the beginning of their course of study, but by persistently repeating the exercises daily and concentrating on them with eagerness and absolute faith in the ultimate results—never allowing laziness of mind or body to stand in the way—they have developed beautiful voices in less than twelve months.

There is no excellence without labour. It is important to remember that it is quality, and not quantity, of effort that counts; in other words, co-ordination of mind and body. These lessons will give you the material for building a foundation upon which the edifice of perfect health and an admirable art will arise.

As you practise day after day and year after year, you will find all your limitations vanishing,

INTRODUCTION

your voice developing, and your untiring efforts towards attaining your heart's desire and reaching the highest possible standard will be rewarded beyond your dreams.

To realize your own defects is the first step in the right direction. Forget self and throw your whole being into your singing. To be really great you must never be satisfied, but strive eternally to attain perfection.

CLARA NOVELLO DAVIES.

CONTENTS

PART ONE

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	VOICE-BUILDING FOR ALL	23
II	THE AGE TO STUDY	31
III	HOW TO LEARN	34
IV	THE TEACHER OF SINGING	40
V	ADVICE TO THE BUSINESS STUDENT	49
VI	BLESSED BARRIERS	53
VII	PERSONAL MAGNETISM	60
VIII	INTERPRETATION	63
IX	MUSICIANSHIP	69
X	CHORAL SINGING	73
XI	CHORAL CONDUCTING	83
XII	SINGING FOR SUCCESS	92

PART TWO

I	THE THROAT	101
II	BREATH-CONTROL FOR SINGING AND PUBLIC SPEAKING	102
III	THE BREATH-LOCK	113
IV	PRELIMINARY BREATHING EXERCISES	116
V	BREATH-LOCKING PHYSICALS	119
VI	CONSONANTS AS AN AID TO FREE TONE	126
VII	EXERCISES FOR TONGUE AND LIPS	134
VIII	"NING" FOR VOICE-PLACEMENT	137
IX	EXERCISES ON "NING" GROUP A	141
X	EXERCISES ON "NING" GROUP B	147
XI	EXERCISES ON "NING" GROUP C	151
XII	EXERCISES ON "NING" GROUP D	154
XIII	DEGREES IN CRESCENDO AND DIMINUENDO	163

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
XIV	EXERCISES ON CONSONANTS AND WORD FORMATIONS	165
XV	THE METHOD APPLIED IN SONG-PRACTICE .	188
XVI	EMBELLISHMENTS	194
XVII	THE TRILL OR SHAKE	200
XVIII	RECITATIVE	203
XIX	TONAL-PHYSICALS	205
XX	THE DAILY REGIME	230
XXI	DIET	235
XXII	THE SINGER'S DEPARTMENT	237

PART ONE

YOU CAN SING

CHAPTER I

VOICE-BUILDING FOR ALL

SOMEONE once wrote "A beautiful voice is the gift of God".

A good singing voice has for too long been regarded as a special gift bestowed by Nature on a chosen few. It is too often forgotten that even the most gifted require years of training and hard work before they can expect to become public singers. While it is generally agreed that a measure of this gift is, in greater or less degree, possessed by most people, many seem to think that it can be cultivated into beauty by a limited number only—a sort of "*vocal elect*".

I maintain that it is as natural to sing as it is to speak, and the singing voice can be cultivated into beauty, like the speaking voice, by all who have the ambition to learn and the patience to

YOU CAN SING

study. No one ever doubts what culture can do for the speaking voice, but when it comes to singing, the majority either attempt to sing without a knowledge of the proper co-ordination of the bodily and mental forces necessary to good tone, or else in ignorance of their own powers profess total inability to sing.

A few who have a proper conception of their own powers and possibilities cultivate what is the birthright of all and become good singers. Those who possess the other necessary qualifications or are willing to cultivate them, become artists, sometimes great artists. But little would have been known of singers possessed of the most beautiful of voices, and the most wonderful artistic instincts, had not their vocal culture been guided by an expert and developed by much careful exercise.

I have stated my belief that everyone who has a speaking voice can be taught to sing well. During my forty years' experience of research-work on the voice I have never yet met such a freak of Nature as a person with two separate

VOICE-BUILDING FOR ALL

mechanisms for voice production, one for speaking and another for singing. Purity in the singing voice merely calls for breath-control and certain adjustments and co-ordination between the muscles and the mind. The difference between the vocal sounds in song and speech is that, while singing consists of a series of sounds, each of a definite pitch, in speech the pitch is seldom constant and the compass much more limited.

Never say that you have "no ear" for music, as I have yet to find anyone whose sense of pitch cannot be cultivated. If you say that a voice does not belong to you, I tell you that you belong to the voice, into which you should learn to pour your whole being, because singing is body and brain wedded in sound.

Over forty years ago I discovered for myself that voice is not merely the agitation of a pair of vocal cords in the larynx, but it is due to the co-operation of breathing, resonating and enunciating. My students begin to sing from their feet upwards, their whole bodily structure expressed in unity with their mental and spiritual selves.

YOU CAN SING

For singing is more than a merely mechanical process. It is a natural means of expressing emotion—as natural as speech itself, and much more neglected. It should be prompted by the natural desire which thrills the whole of our being into activity—every part of the body from the feet upwards, as truly as the life-sap permeates the whole structure of a plant to produce a beautiful flower. Not all voices are exotics, but each can be brought to the highest pitch of perfection of which it is capable. Not every car is a Rolls-Royce, but even a Ford has its uses.

If you stop to consider what is the greatest charm possessed by your most fascinating friends, what makes them stand out from all others in your regard, you will realize that it is often the magnetism of a well-modulated voice. Voice, as the expression of ourselves, has the greatest effect on all with whom we come in contact, and if we use our intelligence on our voice, either in singing or speaking, we win all hearts.

If people would only sing naturally and easily, as in speaking, how charming they would be.

VOICE-BUILDING FOR ALL

They would also sing beautifully. Most people have the strange belief that singing involves strain, and that the better the singing the greater must be the strain, especially on the throat. The hardest work of most teachers of voice is to get the pupils to relax in their efforts and sing naturally.

If singing is so natural a gift you may ask : “ Why should I study ? ” Can we read or write or speak or do any of the countless things of which we are capable without at first learning to do them correctly ? The same applies to singing, which, as I teach it, is an expression of the soul ; but in order to express the soul you must use the proper vehicle in the proper working order.

You may have all the electric power in the world, but if the transmitting mechanism is not correctly built and all its delicate adjustments exactly right, you will get no result. Similarly, your body and brain must be perfectly attuned, and your breathing mechanism under control, before they can manifest this great power in life, with all its charm and appeal.

YOU CAN SING

If an electric machine is out of order an expert electrician is called in to repair it. If the organs and muscles of the body are not properly adjusted for the production of the human voice you cannot sing correctly, but as soon as the human instrument is put in perfect order a natural and beautiful quality of voice is the result. It is merely a matter, as I have said, of co-ordinating the body and brain with the breathing mechanism, and so I teach my pupils to sing as Nature intended they should, spontaneously, and with the whole being.

Singing, whether individual or community (of which I am a life-long advocate), has the effect of bringing us into harmonious sympathy with the hearts and souls of our fellow-men. It is probably the working of a Law as basic as the power of Light, but the fact remains that singing certainly makes the world a better and brighter place. Through singing we can interpret emotions and sentiments in such a heartfelt way that they will reach and appeal to others, playing upon their heartstrings just as a purely produced vocal

VOICE-BUILDING FOR ALL

tone sets into sympathetic vibration its corresponding string in the piano. What, then, would be the effect of this harmony of spirit caused by beautiful singing if it were universal? The Herald Angels *sang* their tidings of goodwill, and it is my firm belief that one of the quickest and surest ways to Peace on Earth is through the happiness created by singing and radiating this joy to others. Singing is a function of the human emotion of the spirit, and it happens to be *the only possible medium* through which the multitude can express themselves together or share the utterance of a common emotion. This emotion can be Love or Hatred, can be that of the Herald Angels or of a Revolutionary Rabble! All great powers can be turned to good or evil, and should be mastered and controlled for good, as we control fire and water.¹

The subject of singing may not at first sight appear to be of great practical bearing upon your

¹ Let us have no "Hymn of Hate"! My son, Ivor Novello, composed a song of the late War, which became so universal that it was sung by friend and foe alike, because, amid all the bloodshed and bitterness, its words carried no bitter thought, but only the hope of reunion and domestic bliss. That is why "Keep the Home Fires Burning" appealed to all.

YOU CAN SING

daily lives; but when you seriously consider the effects of breathing-exercises, not only in acquiring a beautiful voice but in building and maintaining a healthy body and mentality, you will readily understand what a really great factor singing might, and should, be in your everyday routine. It is the greatest and most natural medium whereby you can become healthy, happy, and in harmony with your fellow-men.

CHAPTER II

THE AGE TO STUDY

I HAVE often been asked at what age the study of voice culture should begin, and I always reply "just as soon as one commences to think". The newly-born infant gives us our first lesson in voice production as it curls its little pink toes firmly, as though for muscular support, and draws the breath of life through its nostrils, simultaneously expanding and pushing forward (never upward) the muscles at the base of the lungs. The natural resonators are used, and there is emitted a perfectly "placed" sound that can be heard afar off; but although it may sound beautiful only to its anxious and immediate home circle, it has all the material necessary for a beautiful singing voice if properly developed along natural lines.

Nature is invariably right until human methods, which are often very erring, step in and meddle with things. A well-known London

YOU CAN SING

doctor who has investigated my method of breath-control, and is studying it under my direction because of its health value, explained to me that the first lapse we make from the natural way of breathing is due to that badge of civilization, the baby's "binder"! Every child should be encouraged to breathe correctly, as in early infancy, and also shown the correct use of the lips and tongue in enunciating.

Many people will no doubt say that the little ones are now taught to sing in school, but too often they are allowed to sing together, without being told how to produce the tone correctly. Although born with correct "placement", children are mostly mimics and soon copy the slovenly habits in singing and speaking into which their elders have fallen. I would like to see more men and women with a true love of singing on our local education committees who would demand from every teacher a knowledge of voice culture on the best and simplest lines. The latter need it as much as the children, in order to save the throat from being strained in

THE AGE TO STUDY

the arduous work of teaching. I would have every schoolroom equipped with a good gramophone and simple records made by the greatest artists, so that, from their earliest years, children should be able to hear, appreciate and emulate perfection of tone. Through singing, the child enters into a world of beauty and harmony; learns to express the inmost self; widens the sympathies and develops the mind. Phillip Brooks says: "A song in the heart of a child will do as much for his character as a fact in his memory or a principle in his intellect."

Just as it is never too early to renew the correct method of breathing and voice-placement that is ours when we utter our first sound, so it is never too late to seek to improve the voice by means of building exercises. We live and learn, as the saying goes, and any age is the age to study, but although I have corrected a life-long tremolo in a pupil of sixty, I had rather she came to me at six!

CHAPTER III

HOW TO LEARN

THE most earnest and gifted students are often hindered in their progress because they have never learnt how to learn.

A threefold faith is demanded from all who study with me; faith in themselves, in my method, and in me. The ideal student is the one who, during the lesson, is able to submerge himself utterly, free from all self-consciousness or self-analysis, and so become saturated with all I have to give.

Repetition has been called the handmaid of learning, but there are four necessary aids to progress of which all my students must avail themselves if they wish to achieve a mastery of the art of singing.

They are Repetition, Exaggeration, Concentration and Relaxation.

HOW TO LEARN

Repetition

“Practice makes Perfect” we are told; and naturally, if you repeat any difficult exercise many times, it automatically becomes easy. This repetition may be done mentally if the proper conception of what you wish to attain is imprinted on the mind.

When my serious students are studying a song or aria presenting any difficulty, I mark the harder passages with the number of times I wish them repeated at each practice. The beginner need not be disheartened by finding that some intricate passages have to be repeated as many as sixty times each practice (it may be necessary even for advanced pupils), as it is this capacity for taking pains that marks one out for distinction.

Exaggeration

Exaggerating the consonants in word-practice gives strength, grace and facility in singing. It serves the same purpose as when the artist first puts on more colour than is really required and afterwards removes all surplus carefully, as he

YOU CAN SING

blends his colours and tones them, until the finished picture is a delight to the eye. So it is with the vocal artist who, through the medium of words, seeks to depict his song on the minds of his hearers. He should exaggerate all consonants in practice, and he will find that when he comes to sing in public, with all traces of exaggeration removed, he has mastery over his enunciation, whether forceful or graceful, and makes of the finished song a vivid picture or dainty pastel.

Concentration

Concentration is one of the greatest handmaids in singing, as in all efforts in life, and the more real the concentration of mind that goes into the exercises, the more speedily will the bodily and mental forces co-ordinate. The value of physical breathing-exercises is greatly enhanced by mental concentration on the muscles brought into use, and the same applies to the action of the lips and tongue in forming consonants.

Keep the mind focused on what you are doing

HOW TO LEARN

at the moment, and you will automatically do it better if you allow no extraneous thoughts to enter.

Moreover, the power of concentration can save the student from losing sight of his final aim : the will to sing and to let nothing stand in the way of its accomplishment. Here I may mention that brilliant prospects have been ruined by lack of singleness of purpose. As in the fable of the hare and the tortoise, the race is not always to the swift. Success in singing does not come always to those who show most possibilities at the beginning, no matter how great their natural gifts may be, if they only study and practise spasmodically. I would much rather build up an unpromising voice from its merest beginning in a plodding, serious student who will let nothing interfere with concentration of purpose and progress towards achieving the voice beautiful.

Relaxation

Relaxation of mind and body is just as necessary as concentration. The latter is useful in

YOU CAN SING

practising, but in learning what he is to practise later the student should keep a relaxed state of mind, with no feeling of eager tension or strain, as this hinders absorption.

There is nothing strenuous in the flowing uninterrupted vocalism of trained exponents of this method. In the building stages, and afterwards in keeping the singer fit, the breathing physicals, also the intensive drawing of all the bodily tone essentials into practice on "Ning" and other word-formations, prove rather strenuous at the moment, although they are building up the physique and voice; therefore I always advise periods of relaxation in between.

Lie flat on a couch and consciously "let go" of all tension; feel that the couch surface is bearing you up, and not that you are bearing down on it. Relax mentally, and nerves and muscles will also relax. An excellent way of accomplishing this is as follows: when lying with body as relaxed as possible, close the eyes and try to see a great black velvet curtain stretching infinitely in all directions. Visualize this black

HOW TO LEARN

curtain as dense and dark as possible, and keep all extraneous thought-images out. This is also an excellent and soothing treatment for an overwrought or worried mind.

The Art of Learning also embraces the Art of Listening. Few of us know how to listen so as to assimilate all that is told us for our benefit and guidance.

When standing before a teacher, remember that, for the time being, he is engaged by you to tell you what to do and to think for you throughout the lesson. No teacher can pour all that there is to give into a receptacle already partially filled with a jumble of false concepts. Don't ask questions—let the teacher do the asking. Don't give information—leave that to the teacher, who knows your condition physically, mentally and vocally.

While having a lesson, forget yourself and absorb your teacher; be as a bit of clay in the potter's hands.

Listen—Listen—Listen, absorb and retain.

CHAPTER IV

THE TEACHER OF SINGING

To be a great or good teacher demands all the qualities of leadership and a life-long devotion to the art one seeks to impart to others.

You must be able to inspire others through your constructive ability and to kindle their torches from your own flaming enthusiasm so that they may have a light to guide them along the path of knowledge to a successful goal.

There are too many "teachers", yet of teachers there are far too few. Some Organists who have attained proficiency in the study of their own instrument and understand the principles of conducting and the management of choirs have no scruple in making the teaching of voice-production their lucrative speciality. The same applies to a number of pianists who may at one time have played accompaniments in a vocal studio and who lost no time in gaining a little

THE TEACHER OF SINGING

superficial knowledge of exercises and setting up "in business" for themselves as "voice specialists", without in the least knowing how to apply the very fundamentals of voice production.

Now although musicianship is very essential to the vocal teacher, in itself it is not enough, and can never atone for a lack of a thorough knowledge of the many essentials, including the bodily and mental co-ordination that takes place in voice-building. The organist and pianist should confine themselves to the mechanical instruments within their reach and leave human instruments alone.

Teachers in the smaller cities and towns who have the desire and aptitude for imparting knowledge, need not feel discouraged because they are remote from a larger field of activity and further sources of learning. Provincial teachers whose work is their real interest in life will make a point of gaining more knowledge by keeping in touch with and visiting at intervals the studio of the teacher who gave them the true foundation on which to build a reputation as a teacher.

YOU CAN SING

Thus they will continually enhance that reputation and become the best teachers within their own radius.

In America it is always very touching to me to realize the zeal that lies behind many a provincial teacher's sacrifice, not only financially, but in giving up a summer vacation in order to travel hundreds and sometimes thousands of miles for from a week to a month's further intensive training. They are true zealots and come with the unselfish desire to be able to carry back more knowledge and new inspiration to those who could not otherwise attain to it.

Master Classes for Teachers are a feature of the vacation time in America, and I have willingly foregone my own annual trip to Europe in order to instruct provincial teachers who could not accompany me there. Such enthusiasm and self-sacrifice on their part never failed to find me responsive and eager to give of my best. I, too, am always learning something new and desire to pass it on.

As Voice is the greatest medium whereby

THE TEACHER OF SINGING

personality can express itself, the teacher of voice must be something of a psychologist also, and able to perceive the characteristics of each individual pupil. The attitude of mind, the degree of intelligence and receptivity—all these and other things have to be studied in each pupil if the lessons are to be of the greatest value and help possible.

I try first of all to correct any wrong mental attitude and to get the pupil to become plastic, so that he or she can be the more easily moulded.

The more uncultivated the voice is, the greater is the true teacher's delight in developing it, and the greater his pride and enthusiasm in watching the gradual unfolding and building up of its beauty.

There is less work in starting with a beginner than in undoing a faulty method of production. It is easier for a housebuilder to erect on a bare plot of ground than to raze the old building before putting in the new foundation. It is also easier for a dressmaker to fashion a new gown out of fresh material than to turn an old one

YOU CAN SING

inside out, or alter a garment cut to someone else's ideas.

I do not think it right for any teacher to refuse to train a voice which he considers inferior. What is a teacher for if not to eliminate or tone down whatever the flaw or fault is? The most faulty voice, if possessed by one who has the instinct to cultivate it, can be made pleasant to listen to. I always doubt the teaching abilities of those who will only accept naturally beautiful voices or those that have already been much developed through study. Surely the joy in teaching is in the building of the voice from the beginning and watching it grow as if it were a fine edifice being created from the firm foundation to the roof and ornamentations.

I do not mean to imply that I refuse to accept already advanced pupils, or those with naturally fine voices that are easily perfected. Many such come under my care, as well as some who have already achieved a name professionally, who desire further study, or the correction of faulty habits.

THE TEACHER OF SINGING

The best teachers are never afraid to "give away" too much at one lesson, but do all in their power for the advancement of each pupil and give them all that they can possibly absorb.

One of the best ways of hastening progress is to allow pupils to remain and listen to one another's lessons. I am a great advocate of the Class system in teaching. There is often more absorbed in listening to others than in one's own lesson; noting the results they obtain or the errors they make and are shown how to correct. The best pupils can thereby learn from the worst, as it is the latter who draw forth more explanation from the teacher.

In sharing instruction there is also a chance for each pupil to relax at intervals during the lesson while another takes up the work. A state of relaxation is the correct one for mental absorption.

It is much better for the teacher to allow this privilege to, say, four pupils at a time who have each a half-hour lesson and let them be present throughout the two hours, during which they can

YOU CAN SING

work and relax at intervals, each getting his or her thirty minutes, though not consecutively. This system also helps to eliminate nervousness and restraint on the part of the pupils, so curing them of a sure drawback to success.

The chief quality required in a good teacher is the ability to hold the interest of the pupils. In order to do this one must have a real interest in them. Each should be made to feel that he or she is of absolute interest to the teacher through every stage of the lesson, and a word of encouragement at the beginning will work wonders in arousing enthusiasm. A good teacher makes everyone believe in themselves and what they can accomplish. Never forget to emphasize the good points and enthuse over improvement, while drawing attention to deficiencies when need be.

If a teacher shouts at pupils and informs them that they are the worst that ever entered the studio it is likely to become true, for it may paralyse and weaken their efforts and create a destructive belief that will not be obliterated through succeeding lessons.

THE TEACHER OF SINGING

I would like to quote from a very able article on this subject in the *Etude* of April, 1924.

“Courtesy on the part of the music teacher is an asset so valuable that it is wellnigh priceless. We know of many teachers who have failed because they have not had it. A little brusqueness incurred by unmannerly lack of patience has sent many a good pupil flying from the studio. Competition in this day is too severe in the music-teaching field to permit a lack of courtesy to injure your business opportunities. There was a time when the curt, abrupt, uncivil, ill-bred habits of certain famous teachers were advertised and exploited as necessary factors in their work. Armed with a ferule or pencil, they rapped knuckles and yelled out their heartless criticisms, with the idea that only by such means was the pupil to be properly disciplined.

“The whole world of science is now horrified by such methods, which, in the light of the far-reaching discoveries of Sigmund Freud, may result in the most disastrous physical and mental

YOU CAN SING

conditions. The world is literally strewn with wrecks which, if we believe the psychologists and physicians, are caused by thoughtless people lacking the simple quality of courtesy.

.

“ There is very little difference between hitting a defenceless person with a cruel epithet and hitting him with a blackjack. The phrase may prove the more fatal weapon.

“ Courtesy is such an easy thing to cultivate that every teacher should make a daily effort to develop it. It is founded on the Golden Rule. If you want to know whether you are courteous at lessons just put yourself in the pupils' place all the time. Do what is just and right and kind and square, and you will be a better teacher.”

CHAPTER V

ADVICE TO THE BUSINESS STUDENT

THE student who has to earn a living apart from singing need not feel too handicapped, as it is a well-known fact that those who can always find time for something extra are the busiest people; and a business foundation teaches the student how to take care of his own affairs later on.

If you will only concentrate mentally on the proper co-ordination of all the essentials for purity of tone, they will gradually adjust themselves. Such concentration can be done many times during the day by even the busiest student. There is no one kept so severely to business as to be quite unable to practise one or another of the many aids to good singing.

Make progressive use of all the many spare moments that punctuate even the busiest day to do breathing exercises and lip and tongue movements, etc., also the memorizing of songs and

YOU CAN SING

mental interpretation. Deep breathing can be practised while walking to business—"locking" the breath and trying to hold it as long as possible, always adding to the distance covered between breaths. Plenty of silent practice can be done while travelling in the train or car.

If you are in earnest about your studies you can always find time, and a great part of my method of voice production can be practised almost silently as you sit at a typewriter or desk, or stand behind a counter, or sew, or go round the house doing housework. "Lock" your breath at any work you are doing and your work and health and voice will improve!

It is a fact that one of my most successful singers, whose name used to appear in headlines, was a pit-head girl, who remained at her work for quite a long time while studying with me.

Your work will not deteriorate by your singing study, as you are at the same time improving your health and physique as well as your mentality. All this has such an important effect on

ADVICE TO THE BUSINESS STUDENT

the quality of the work done that employers would do well to make singing a feature of the day's routine, even if only for a five-minutes' interval twice a day. It would well repay them to do so. All large business houses and factories should have a choir of the workers, and all should join in "Community" singing for the first few minutes before commencing work in the morning, then everyone would feel happy and in a mood to get right down to business! During the lunch hour there should also be a few minutes' singing together, and the workers would resume their labours in a renewed state of buoyant energy. The most up-to-date Efficiency Experts realize that a happy worker in harmonious surroundings gives a greater and better output of work than when under the goad of a slave-driver.

But to return to the problem of the student at business. There are not only the early mornings for exercise, but also the evenings, that might easily be spent in a less profitable and healthful manner.

YOU CAN SING

I very often get the best results from students who have to do a day's hard work, mental or physical, before coming to the studio. They have that blessed incentive, Ambition, ever urging them on to higher things, or they would never seek to cope with business life as well as the pursuit of an ideal. This urge encourages them to rise an hour earlier in the morning for physical and breathing exercises and vocal practice, and it is chiefly for such students that I have arranged the combination of all exercises in the series named "Tonal Physicals", so as to economize time.

It is usually the students with plenty of time on their hands, and fond parents to finance their studies, who are slack in applying all that the teacher has to give. Too often they allow extraneous matters and outside interests to interfere with serious study, for they have had no battle with life to give them a sturdy endurance and purpose in plodding on towards a finer and wider existence that lies away on the horizon.

CHAPTER VI

BLESSED BARRIERS

It is all very well to speak of some as having "a bed of roses", but who would wish to make of life a perfumed sleep? Someone has said "Pray for obstacles", and I often think how weak we should be without them.

During over forty years' teaching in different parts of the world I have listened to thousands of complaints from students who considered themselves handicapped by their struggles toward achievement. These tales of woe are usually from beginners, and the first thing I strive to do is to get students to be right-minded and to look on Life with a wider vision.

Every teacher meets with the student who is introspective regarding health and feelings; who has such a battle with long business-hours, with unfeeling, antagonistic relations, or with these ills combined! They themselves are never in the

YOU CAN SING

wrong, but are always the sufferers from a cruel fate. They fail to realize that one's determination is only aroused by opposition and that we should slack in all our purpose and enthusiasm for achievement if everything were plain sailing.

"Easy come, easy go", is a true saying, and the things we prize most in life are the things that cost us painful effort to achieve and retain.

It is not the barriers or obstacles, in themselves, that make for success. No one can deny that they block the way. Their virtue lies in the qualities of mind that must be aroused and brought into combat with them. Those qualities would lie dormant if their possessor merely took the line of least resistance, and we should soon become extinct through sheer ineffectual softness and inanity.

The scale always balances, and, if you pause to study all your assets, you will find that the advantages you may lack in one way are amply compensated for by those you possess in another.

BLESSED BARRIERS

I have taught students in every grade of social life, and I must confess that I have had more sad confidences from the "idle rich" than from struggling business and other working students.

The higher you have to climb, and the rougher the way, the greater must be the joy of achievement. To ascend from the "Slough of Despond" to the mountain top is a matter of physical effort and mental vision, and the mountain top is more appreciated after the Slough.

When you see or hear someone who is successful in their Art do not say or think that you could do as well or better if you had their "chance". Think, if you like, how you could rival them if you worked as hard as they, or how you could overcome the same obstacles in "getting there".

My own greatest achievements have been won in the face of every obstacle that could place itself in the way. My first lesson in fighting against the greatest obstacle of all, the temptation to take the line of least resistance, was given me when I was in my early 'teens by my ever-wise father, to whom I owe much that I have accomplished

YOU CAN SING

since. I had then embarked on my musical career, but had become lethargic and indolent, and only wanted to sit around. My father, who loved me dearly, took me aside one day and told me the truth that is said to be so unpalatable; that if I died at that moment nobody would be any the worse! The world would go on, none the better by my having existed! I should have been merely a useless cumbrer of the earth, etc., etc.! To mollify my wounded spirit, he added that, of course, my mother and he would miss me, but only because they loved me. I think I practised all day after that, and I certainly have not left off working since!

If you “enjoy” poor health, exercise your body and learn to talk of how well you feel. If your relations irritate and annoy you, ask yourself wherein you antagonize—and possibly agonize—them!

If you work long hours when you would rather be studying, learn to love your work, and it will not hurt your spirit one bit. You can utilize many spare minutes—if only mentally—towards

BLESSED BARRIERS

attaining to the heights. If you think you suffer from insurmountable difficulties, read the life-history of our greatest artists, musicians who have begun their careers under the stress of hardship and fought their way to fame; then laugh at your own cowardice and emulate their pluck.

The work of acquiring the mechanism of voice production is comparatively simple, merely a matter of time, patience, and faith in one's self and in the method; but in my own teaching I also endeavour to put my students' minds in harmony with the Universe, and when once their attitude towards their work, and towards life itself, is the correct one, my task becomes a delight. Since singing is, as I maintain, the proper uniting of body and brain—muscle and mind—our thought must be trained, our mental outlook on life and all humanity broadened, just as we seek by physical exercises to develop the structure of our human instrument.

In conjunction with the first lesson on voice-production I give the student a card with the following helpful rules:

YOU CAN SING

Promise Yourself

To be so strong that nothing can disturb your Peace of Mind.

To talk Health, Happiness and Prosperity to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel that there is something in them.

To look on the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.

To think only of the best, to work only for the best, and to expect only the best.

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future.

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.

To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

To think well of yourself and to proclaim your

BLESSED BARRIERS

self-confidence to the world, not in loud words but in great deeds.

To live in the faith that the world is on your side as long as you are true to the best that is in you.

Be vital, be big, feel the urge of life ever moving you on toward greater things. Control circumstances, do not let them master you. It is puny and small to whine about the effect of other people, or of your environment, on your health and ambitions. It is within your power to create a new environment or re-create the old.

Break barriers down while blessing them. They are Nature's way of selecting the fittest to enter the "Promised Land" of artistic achievement. "Where there's a will there's a way." Never was there a truer saying.

Keep your goal shining always before you, and you will fail to notice those terrible but blessed barriers, for they will have ceased to exist.

CHAPTER VII

PERSONAL MAGNETISM

THE term Personal Magnetism has been tossed from metaphysics to biology and back again until to many it has lost most of its meaning; and it has been further obscured by countless definitions. A magnet must of necessity be more powerful than that which it attracts. A personal magnet must have more physical and mental force than the person or persons drawn to its charms. I consider Personal Magnetism an essential achievement of my method, built up by the physical, breathing and mental exercises I give my students.

It is radiated from a happily-poised mind, with a body in fine physical condition. The continual deep-breathing exercises which are a basic part of my method are an important factor in this. The body is filled with a subtle form of energy which it then radiates. This is not a new idea. The Hindus were cognizant of it hundreds of years

PERSONAL MAGNETISM

ago and perfected it in the form of "*Prana*"—a hidden source of energy which they believed to enter the body with the breath.

In the development of this personal attraction the mental training, co-ordinated with control of the body, is, after all, the most important factor.

A sound, wholesome personality, a strong will and vivid emotions, all these are essential for great singing. In my teaching I pay attention to them all, but I contend that the mind is most important.

The mind is the greatest factor of all, as it is through the mind that the actual detailed control of the bodily forces is brought about, that control which is so absolutely necessary to perfect singing in public. If we can control ourselves we can command the appreciation of others.

Thus the elusive quality known as Personal Magnetism in singing is seen to be brought about by training the mind and body, but to develop all this there must be unswerving purpose. With that sure and safe foundation the singer readily develops a consciousness of creative ability, and

YOU CAN SING

when he hears himself interpreting beautiful music in a beautiful way a curious change takes place in him. So great is the effect of the production of beautiful sound upon the mind, so stimulating is this sense of actually creating something lovely, that the student develops that most-sought-after quality—Personal Magnetism.

CHAPTER VIII

INTERPRETATION

MUSIC touches the same depths of the human heart as Religion and Love. If therefore the singer would stir his audience he must touch those springs of emotion inherent in us all. To do this, two things are necessary, one is spontaneity and the other is skill. They are not opposed, and the first is a result of the final release of the second.

Art has been defined as "the spontaneous, intelligently-directed expression of personality, manifested through various mediums. The artist interprets and re-creates the world, according to his highest conception of truth". Song must therefore be not only spontaneous but intelligently directed. A perfect blending of physiological and psychological elements must be obtained before self-expression can be hoped for in terms of musical sound. In order to bring about this

YOU CAN SING

perfect harmony in one's self and communicate it to others the would-be artist must first learn to live healthily and happily.

Once this is done, and the voice and technique are built up, the artist can release his own personality into his work with all the spontaneity of the lark singing. This training involves not only the physical and technical processes with which I deal later, but also a sound intellectual equipment. The singer who has a fine appreciation of the Poets is infinitely more fitted to interpret great music than an illiterate or uncultured one. Every Art supplements the other, and a great understanding of literature means so much more interpretative power in singing.

The first requisite for a singer is the conviction that Life is good, and that the joy of it within one's self can be shared with others and expressed, as the birds express it, through the glorious medium of song. Quite obviously, then, a voice radiating the beauty of living, and the happiness that can be created within one's self, is more effective than tones that are merely mechanically

INTERPRETATION

perfect; but if both elements are combined, the singer is irresistible to all.

This is the mystery of life, that we find ourselves only as we give ourselves, and no better way to real happiness has yet been discovered than by giving out happiness to others; and we can only find the secret through a true outlook on life itself.

Caruso's wonderful voice did not owe its fame to vocal beauty alone. He sang with his spirit. His great, generous heart spoke straight to the hearts of his hearers, and they responded.

The singer must cultivate a buoyant outgoing attitude towards other people, a feeling that he has something fine and splendid to give, that he is a vehicle to express the best emotions of humanity. The singer and the song must remain inseparable. He must feel poignantly what he is singing about and without mannerisms convey it to the audience; he must learn to throw feeling and movement into his singing without in the least losing control of himself. The emotion should be given out in a seemingly unreserved manner, but the singer must have full control of it.

YOU CAN SING

When the breath, body and brain all work in unison; when the whole being sings instead of a mere voice belonging to you; when *you* belong to your voice; when the song expresses not only the meaning of the poet and composer but also your own personality, then indeed we have that divine manifestation which the artist alone can convey.

If you are not greatly gifted with a poetic soul you can nevertheless gain an idea of how to interpret a song if you will adhere to the marks of expression printed thereon. By doing so you can come as near as possible to the meaning that the writer and composer of it seek to convey. The inherent poetic instinct marks the real artist, but lack of it need not prevent anyone from giving expression to a song and rendering its meaning and message clearly to an audience, if they will obey the signs given them for guidance.

In learning a song, a great deal of the work should be done before a note is sung. After the words are learnt by heart, the time must be studied, noting every variety of shade and change. The song must then be gone over mentally until

INTERPRETATION

you realize and appreciate its structure and sense throughout.

If you study how to get expression and emotion into the voice, sooner or later you will succeed. Just as an aspirant to film fame practises how to "register" the different emotions with his features, so should the student of singing seek to depict each emotion and shade of feeling with the voice until it responds exactly as he wishes, and conveys all he seeks to express.

Faithful interpretations can only be accomplished after a great deal of conscientious work on the part of the student, unless he or she is specially gifted of the Gods.

I ask several of my students to seat themselves at one end of the room. I then ask the student whose voice is being treated for expression to take up his position at the farthest end of the room from the others, and with his back to them. Now, while producing a single tone without words of any sort, he is asked to throw into that tone any emotion—love, compassion, defiance, anger, fear, whatever it may be, without the other

YOU CAN SING

students being told what emotion he seeks to convey. Then the other students have to state the expressions he is conveying to them by his tone.

This seems very difficult, but I have had students who could convey in this manner as many as five distinct emotions which were clearly identified by the listeners. Two of my students who could give interpretations in this way with great success were Lewys James, and the late Charles Mott.

This is a splendid test for developing emotional tone-quality in interpreting songs, and the singer finds himself able to throw any amount of heart and spirit into the words, conveying by the voice the thoughts expressed by the text, and gaining a poignancy of expression which so many singers never attain to at all.

CHAPTER IX

MUSICIANSHIP

How many Singers are retarded in their progress by lack of Musicianship? This lack has often been the only handicap to really great voices.

It is extraordinary how many promising students fail to realize the prime necessity of a good acquaintance with ordinary music notation, and of facility in interpreting it. How much valuable time is wasted in the studio when a teacher finds that perhaps the most promising voice of all stumbles and hesitates owing to a lack of musical knowledge! It is as necessary for a student of singing to know thoroughly the theory of music and to be able to read it at sight as for an actor to be able to read a part handed to him. There are many excellent and simple books on theory, and certain schools have evening classes in this subject.

The singer should know every technical detail

YOU CAN SING

of the music he seeks to interpret; and if it is a song or an aria of a great master, he should study many of his works, in order to get right into his inner meaning and style, and thus be able to interpret it to the audience.

The mediocrity which exists among those who possess really good voices, set out with dreams of fame, is mostly due to lack of musicianship and proper training in every branch of singing.

You would not dare to assume that you are a virtuoso because you are the proud possessor of a very fine piano or violin, without the necessary musical education and practice required for playing them. Thus, to possess a beautiful voice alone, without musicianship, will never make you an artist, and will stamp you as a mediocrity or a failure.

Whenever possible, I insist on the piano as a second study, as, apart from this being a splendid training in musicianship, the singer becomes capable of playing his own accompaniments—an invaluable asset at times.

MUSICIANSHIP

The best of all training in musicianship is obtained by singing in ensemble work. So keen am I on the value of Part Singing that, in London and New York, I established "Artist Choirs" of my singers. Though each was a solo artist, I felt that it was as important to be able to hold one's own against the other parts as to be a soloist. I am not here encouraging the self-assertive competition between four voices that so often ruins, say, the well-known Quartette from "Rigoletto", but I do say that one must be musician enough to hold one's own against the harmonizing notes of the others.

It shows a decided lack of musicianship when a singer cannot subordinate his voice to others for the sake of effect; and it is certainly most inartistic in one of a group of voices to seek to predominate and draw attention to itself. The ability to blend with other parts shows a real sense of artistic and musicianly values.

A case in point occurs to me. Many years ago the late Sir Joseph Barnby, that great musician, was rehearsing a work which I was

YOU CAN SING

directing. It was an auspicious occasion for a certain young contralto who had just started on her career after studying at one of the great London Colleges. She had to take part in a quartette, but as she had not taken the trouble to be note-perfect, or to learn to read at sight, nor was able to blend her voice with the other three, after the rehearsal her engagement was cancelled and her part given to a member of the choir. Surely this was the worst possible mischance that could befall a young artist!

Oratorio and Opera both abound in ensemble work for the principals, and many soloists have failed to be re-engaged because the Conductor found them lacking in the essentials of musicianship.

If the singer is to keep pace with or get ahead of others in his chosen profession, he must be a thorough musician as well.

CHAPTER X

CHORAL SINGING

FROM the moment I could think, Choral Singing was the most important thing in my life. When most little girls were playing with their dolls, I was either listening to choral harmony, or sharing my father's despair because certain effects in tonal quality or diction had not been realized by the followers of his baton. The score of an Oratorio had no terrors for me—it was only an excursion into an unknown and enchanted land.

To conduct a choir was always my dream, so when I *did* turn my attention to dolls I vigorously waved my baton at them and used to wish that the Queen could see me!

Little did I dream that this wish would one day be realized, and that Queen Victoria would send me a Royal Command to Osborne House on February 8th, 1894, to conduct my Welsh Ladies' Choir, on our return from the Chicago

YOU CAN SING

World's Fair, where the choir and soloists had won the first prizes.

Her Majesty immediately took the choir under Royal Patronage, adding the prefix "Royal" to their name, and presenting me with the brooch-pendant I always wear as my mascot through life, a tiny replica of the Crown surmounting her initials V.R.I. in diamonds.

It was the first time that Queen Victoria had commanded and set her seal of approval on any choir, and I felt proud not only of my choristers but of our native Wales.

In the days when the bards were hailed as kings for their divine gift, the Welsh people dedicated themselves to the service of St. Cecilia, and to this day an Eisteddfod is for everyone a renewal of that vow.

In 1922, during rehearsals for my Jubilee Festival in Cardiff, when I conducted a mammoth choir of sixty choirs and their conductors combined, I travelled many miles into the Welsh mountains, principally among the mining districts; and the recollection of those men blackened

CHORAL SINGING

and work-stained, emerging from the pits and bursting into song with notes of pure gold, will be for me a hallowed and beautiful memory. They sing because they *must*, as birds sing. I suppose it is a cry of thanksgiving on renewing communion with the sun, and the pleasant things of earth. To me, the most striking and moving thing was that their flood of harmony came as a natural expression. It was no product of an almost exaggerated civilization, but a force old as the earth itself; new as the ever-recurring day; a gift that can be shared by all of us; not a special piece of perfection for the carefully cultivated few.

I wish the love of choral singing was as common everywhere as it is in Wales, where it is fostered and given every encouragement by open competitions at each Eisteddfod.

Choral singing brings a multitude of kindred souls together, and binds them with the bonds of brotherly feeling and a common interest. Music is the one real universal language, and more good would be accomplished in Inter-

YOU CAN SING

national relations by visiting choirs than by visiting Statesmen.

I first realized the truth of this thirty-three years ago, when I toured with one of my choirs through the principal cities of America. We all returned home with a new feeling of love and friendliness for that country, and a true appreciation of the many kindnesses and the hospitality met with, from the President and Mrs. Mackinley downward. We felt, as indeed they made us feel, that we all belonged to the same family!

Before I left America quite recently, I started the idea of a Choral Symphony, in which voices would be the only instruments. I began with my "Artists' Choir", a picked ensemble of close on a hundred artists, each a professional singer with a glorious voice and artistic qualities.

They had to pass an audition by a Committee of Artists, including Mdme. Marquerite D'Alvarez, Mdme. Frieda Hampel, Mdme. Frances Alda, also M. Andreas de Segurola and other representative musicians.

CHORAL SINGING

My idea was to provide young artists, not only with a field for interpretation, but also with payment for their work. I have always failed to see why choral singers should not be treated financially the same as other instrumentalists who play in orchestras, as the human instrument is the most beautiful of all. I should also like choral and solo accompaniments hummed by certain of the choristers instead of played by instruments, as no mechanical instrument, however well or artistically played, can convey the emotions capable of expression by the human voice.

No one can realize the perfection of beauty that can yet be achieved in choral singing when human voices in ensemble are trained as a vocal orchestra, and to sing great symphonies composed for it.

Individuality always finds expression in the voice, and that voice must be an integral part of you through which you can touch your fellow beings. In the perfect choral singer that individuality is merged and melted into a wonderful fellowship of melodious team-work. A choir

YOU CAN SING

should be not just a mass of perfectly-trained and well-directed voices, but each voice expressing in fullness and abundance its own especial nature and individual striving for perfection, until it blends and moulds into a new and greater individuality—that of the perfect choir.

Choral singing is not only the rendering and blending together of melody and words : it is the artistic conception of the spirit of the words, that must be fully grasped and interpreted. The sudden changes from grave to gay must be felt by the audience without their being aware of how they are brought about. All present must unconsciously be transported into another atmosphere which has been created for them by the combined voices of the choir, and this can only be done by all the members of the choir feeling in their inner being that they are the subjects of Fate; the spirits of Fancy the composer and poet have fashioned together.

This may sound like hyperbole, but it is nothing of the kind : only an end to be sought for and accomplished by every member of a choir

CHORAL SINGING

before it can interpret with artistry and truth any musical work; and this of course can never be achieved without a conductor who is able to transport himself at will into the realms of Fancy, as well as holding firmly to an earthly realization of his Art.

No conductor can bring out the inner sense and meaning of the words if the singers are not word-perfect, and able to focus their eyes on him.

I will never conduct my choir, or rehearse it after the first week or so, unless the members know their music and words, especially the latter, sufficiently well to look at me. I can recall so many cases in which I have seen a choir with all eyes stolidly concentrated on their scores, with every now and then a tolerant glance sent casually in the direction of the conductor, who might as well be absent; and the results have always been exactly what I anticipated—a technically correct rendering of the music, with the words in the right place, but the spirit and message of that music and those words utterly lacking.

I believe I am not wanting in resourcefulness

YOU CAN SING

in dealing with general emergencies, of which there are many more in one concert than is commonly imagined; but there is one thing which I readily admit is beyond my power to cope with. I am entirely helpless when conducting if every eye is not fixed on me. The more so because what is in me to give out to them, and through them to the audience, comes from my facial expression more than my baton, as I form every word correctly with lips and tongue-tip, and show every fleeting expression and mood of words and music. Thus, if my choir is not with me in spirit and oneness, then we are lost.

If in any member there is any lack of love for the work and of unity with me, I sense it immediately, and the choir realizes this also with a vague sense of discomfort. I do not speak now of huge or massed choirs I have conducted, but of the smaller and more intimate ensemble of artists I have won my greatest successes with, all trained vocally by me, voices and breathing all produced on my own lines. If such a disturbing element as aforementioned cannot be shaken off,

CHORAL SINGING

the unfortunate offender must for the time being leave the others, for he cannot be allowed to sing in an atmosphere that, apart from him, radiates happiness and harmony.

During one of the "Patti" concerts in Manchester, when I appeared with my Royal Welsh Ladies' Choir, I was about to conduct a performance of Lassen's "Spanish Gipsy", when I was made conscious of a definite something wrong in our atmosphere. My glance fell upon one of my leading Contraltos, a brilliant girl with a glorious voice. In an instant I intuitively realized that she was not at one either with the rest of the choir or with me, and that, while she sang, our effort could never be that of one harmonious and perfect whole, the blending of spirit with sound. I quietly bent down and whispered to her to leave the platform; and when she had gone to the artists' room a spirit of complete unity was restored. It transpired afterwards, when she gracefully apologized for her inward feelings, that she was intensely jealous of my having given a solo to another girl whose

YOU CAN SING

voice she considered inferior to her own.

This little illustration instances the at-one-ness of my choralists and myself, and I am glad to say it was an exceptional case, as my singers usually gloried in each other's success, and no individual member of my choirs knew when it might be his or her own chance to shine in solo work. I had trained them all so that I could call forth any singer for the most exacting operatic aria or solo, and I remember two occasions at Harrison Subscription Concerts when two of my choir members got their chance by deputizing for Evangeline Florence and Ada Crossley, with great success.

Choral singing, when its greatest effects can be achieved, is the most beautiful and inspiring of all music; it opens Heaven to our senses; it is a united multitude of hearts and souls, not only of the singers but of their hearers; all merged into one vast ecstasy of delight. It is as though each individual singer were a colourful thread woven into a Magic Carpet to bear and transport us through the ether to a Wonderland of Bliss.

CHAPTER XI

CHORAL CONDUCTING

I HAVE been requested to include a chapter on Choral Conducting, by several of my colleagues in that art.

Despite the graceful compliment that M. Saint-Saëns paid me at the Trocadero, Paris, when my singers were the successful winners at the Paris Exposition,¹ I do not consider that there is anything approaching the "magical" in my conducting, but merely a great capacity for taking pains, and the outcome of a life-long devotion to the development of the God-given voice that I maintain is possessed in varying degree by all.

The material I had at my disposal was no

¹ Saint-Saëns said of Madame Clara Novello Davies in the Trocadero at the Exposition in Paris when placing the gold crown of laurel leaves on her head:

"Your teaching is perfect and your conducting magical."

M. Bourgault-Ducoudray, ex-president Paris Conservatory of Music, wrote:

"Madame Clara Novello Davies is a marvellous conductor. She possesses the exquisite delicacy of feminine sentiment and the magnetism indispensable for inspiring singers. I have never heard such wonderful effects in interpretation—so intense, so varied, so pure."

YOU CAN SING

better and no worse than that found in the average choir, but I had the advantage of being a teacher of voice-building along certain lines, and I have always given my choral singers the same careful attention in correcting faulty production that I give my students, so that their voices were produced and developed in a similar way, enabling them the more easily to blend as one, and with the same powerful breath support and control.

It will readily be seen what an asset it is for a conductor to have a knowledge of voice-production and how to utilize it in tonal blending, a perfectly free production that enables the singers to give their entire attention to depicting the meaning of the words. I trust that fellow conductors may gain some benefit to pass on to their singers from the lessons on breathing and voice-building contained in this book.

I would like to quote the following excerpts from an article in the *Etude*, an American musical magazine, for April, 1924, contributed by me:

CHORAL CONDUCTING

“ To be an ideal conductor there are many essentials, and the first, and perhaps the last as well, is a magnetic personality, one that can create harmony among those he controls, and keep a loving discipline over all. Love and Faith are important factors, and the conductor must give proof of his capabilities and character before he can secure either of these two great gifts from the singers under his baton.

“ You must love your work above all else, and make it the greatest enthusiasm of your life, then you will have the power within you to make all your singers enthusiastic lovers of it also.

“ You must possess entire confidence in those under your direction, and in return they will place entire confidence in you.

“ Both physically and metaphorically you must plant your feet firmly down, with baton in hand, knowing, with fullest confidence in your powers, that you can make your band of voices sing, and sing to such good purpose that, blended as one voice, they will reach to the inmost thoughts and hearts of your audience, and your choir will

YOU CAN SING

soon realize all this too, and rise to every occasion.

“ It is so important to begin rehearsals with the right atmosphere that I feel I cannot emphasize this point too much, and I am speaking from forty years of experience and successful achievement; but rehearsals are not the real beginning after all. It is in finding the most suitable material to mould most easily, as I prefer a pleasant personality and pliability to mere vocal quality, for the former attributes are more difficult to cultivate than the latter.

“ I then get them to sing individually to me, being very sympathetic and gracious with the nervous, and striving to put them at ease. The greatest thing of all is that they must love the work sufficiently to become one among many; be prepared to eliminate self in order to form one great harmonious whole.

“ There is another vital question: are they sufficiently interested to be prepared to learn the words, music, time, and other details, out of rehearsal hours, so that they can memorize every-

CHORAL CONDUCTING

thing? When I am fully satisfied on all these points, and assured that it will be a great benefit to themselves and everyone concerned, for them to join my choir, then the first important step is over.

“ The music for the programme is given them to take home for study, and they are told in advance what to prepare for each rehearsal. I have a sub-conductor go over their score with them until they are word and note perfect and ready for me. Their minds being entirely free from thought of worrying about words, time, or music, you may ask what more is there for *me* to do? It is then that the real concerted work begins, the welding together, as it were, of many individuals into one perfect whole, and to express the full meaning of the words and music as a great artist would.”

The first thing I do when I stand before my choir at rehearsal is to look at them with a feeling of love and happiness in my heart. They all stand up with me, and we do a few breathing exercises together, for it is most important that

YOU CAN SING

all who sing together should breathe in the same manner.

Then we turn to the first chorus that we are going to attack, and I read the words, thrash out to the full the ideas contained in them, and gather all the points together.

This is as important every whit as the music, and if the conductor has not a sense of pathos, beauty, and lyrical feeling, but is wedded merely to his score, then greatness is not for him, nor is it for those who learn under his baton.

So much depends on the conductor himself realizing and analysing the words and their message to his choir, so that they too can understand and interpret the words they sing, as much as they do the music, properly wedding it to them.

When my choir has fully realized the meaning of the words, they read them aloud to me, exaggerating all the consonants with much lip and tongue action. Then I repeat the words and give the choir the ideas I wish them to convey. When I feel and know from their

CHORAL CONDUCTING

facial expressions that they have fully grasped all I have given them, they recite the words again to me, this time without exaggeration, but speaking naturally and with feeling, to bring out the points and nuances as I wish. When I am satisfied that they all have the idea so that it has become one vitalized thought, we proceed to express all that the music has within it. Each phrase is taken separately, and we repeat it before going on to the next, until I am assured that every word will be heard and understood by the farthest-off person in a large hall or theatre.

During rehearsals, when everything seems going splendidly, and the singers are well into their work, I often stop conducting quite unexpectedly, and always certain voices go on without me, as their eyes have not been riveted on my face, a thing I demand when my singers have had time to memorize. This little trick of mine catches all those whose minds are wandering, or whose eyes are surreptitiously on their score, and they feel foolish when they hear their two or

YOU CAN SING

three or maybe their one and only voice breaking the silence.

I find that when my singers have had plenty of rehearsals (and that is a point upon which I always insist) they are able to blend their voices like one, for they sing with everything in them imbued with the same idea, and with the lips and tongue so exercised by the exaggeration of consonants that the words are perfectly enunciated. They all have the same expression after reciting the words so often together, and the one idea so expressed in perfect unison makes the largest choir become as one great voice.

I make my singers sign a promise to attend a maximum of rehearsals before they enroll, otherwise I feel better off without them. It is a fact that those who are often among the missing are the most regretted when they are really there, as the others have got so far ahead of them, and they are only a drag and liable at the last moment to spoil a long-rehearsed effect that they knew not of.

Just as an electric current can be conveyed from

CHORAL CONDUCTING

the person attached to it, by contact, to others, so does personal contact help to carry and blend both the voice and spirit in singing, and I always make it a rule that my singers sit or stand as closely as possible together, arms or shoulders touching to form this connecting link in their Chain of Song.

Some of the most inspiring moments of my life have been experienced when holding my baton before a great choir which has been through all the processes necessary to bring out everything the composer and author have desired.

This is the final result of my work. The voices all blend, they get the same quality permeating them, every eye is fixed on me. I move my lips, even when conducting in public, and form the words as we sing them. I have the idea that they are trying to convey, and they catch from my facial expression the thought for which they are working. We are all drawn into one spirit, until we are singing as one, blending, harmonizing, sympathizing, loving everything connected with this outgiving of ourselves in Song.

CHAPTER XII

SINGING FOR SUCCESS

IF a good voice alone merited success, we should have millions of successful singers all over the world, instead of a few. The teacher of singing should be able not only to train the voice but to teach success in singing, and develop all the elements of it in the student. The most invaluable assets to an artistic and successful career are poise, personality and the ability to interpret, and all of these can be cultivated. How often do we hear singers with really mediocre quality of tone making a great success with it (or despite of it!) while, on the other hand, we hear wonderful vocal quality not used successfully!

To be a successful singer the student must also keep in mind at all times three basic truths. He must know what he wants, must think of it constantly, must think of it constructively. His

SINGING FOR SUCCESS

Art must permeate his whole being, but must not fill it to the exclusion of other necessary interests.

A great danger to the artist is narrowness of mind, and the egotism bred of it. This, of all things, the artist should abhor and avoid. Why professional singers, whose medium of expression is the most far-reaching and direct, should be especially liable to this failing I do not know, but they most certainly are. I cannot urge too strongly that all young singers should broaden their minds and interests. Cultivate among your friends all types of people. Someone once said that the ideal circle of friends for a writer would be a financier, a successful burglar, a musician, a policeman, a politician, a minister, and a professional athlete. The same idea applies to singers, and the reason is not far to seek. If we are to interpret Life we must know it from experience, and not only as we read or hear others talk of it. The really great artist, you will note, has an amazingly wide field of interest, and keeps his fingers on the public pulse. There-

YOU CAN SING

fore keep an open and receptive mind, and, above all, avoid a complacent feeling of superiority. I really have to touch upon this failing of some singers—the downfall of many a rising young artist, and, alas, of too many who have achieved considerable success!

The moment success comes, some artists at once assume that the whole world of creative endeavour has been conquered and place themselves upon a pinnacle. Henceforward they begin to ignore the friendly voices of constructive criticism. This pathetic isolation upon a peak of self-claimed superiority at once shuts up the artist in the circle of his own personality. His ego feeds upon conceit, and the cancer of vanity grows and grows to the exclusion and decay of all healthy development.

Nothing but failure and unhappiness can result from such enveloping egotism.

We are born with individual personalities, and as we grow up our problem is to blend them with those we come into contact with, to avoid clashing and friction. We must also learn to blend,

SINGING FOR SUCCESS

because no personality, however great, is sufficient unto itself, but must be part of a compound of humanity, only completed by meeting and merging with other personalities.

The voice in singing should be an expression of your inner self. If you are out of harmony with yourself or with those around you, you can never have as much success as you otherwise would, for antagonistic qualities show themselves first of all in the voice. It is for this reason I believe that we have not more great singers to-day. They have neglected this part of themselves, or ruined it by wrong-thinking, jealousy and conceit.

Remember that you must put *yourself* into your voice, therefore you must be sure that the real you, the personality that you reveal to the audience, is one that will appeal to them, and that they in turn will love and understand.

Life's greatest joy is Love, and we must learn to love life and all humanity, and incorporate it in our singing if we would be successful. "Love never passes away, but if there be knowledge it

YOU CAN SING

is outgrown.” Therefore let us combine the power of love with our knowledge if we would attain perfection in anything, for unless we have a loving heart it does not make any difference as to what we know or what we do—we are nothing!

Success in singing thus means the development of many qualities. It means cultivating the mind to be receptive of the art of others. It means building your body into a fine physical Temple, and absolutely co-ordinating it with a broadened and cultured mind. It means adopting a happy attitude towards life, and a feeling of love towards humanity.

It means the denial of Fear, the abandonment of Timidity, and the repudiation of the thought of the possibility of Failure. Above all, it means a keen and ever-present sense of the great privilege of the artist in being able to add something to the beauty of the world, and, in a form of rare appeal, to add a portion to the work of creation and achievement.

Singing, as I regard it, is much more than

SINGING FOR SUCCESS

voice-production. It revolutionizes lives, making them not only healthier and happier, but more magnetic as the personality develops. The health improves, the mind becomes finer, and with the development of personality there comes a feeling of calm, assured poise.

PART TWO

CHAPTER I

THE THROAT

FORGET IT

CHAPTER II

BREATH-CONTROL FOR SINGING AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

TRAINING in breath-control gives the greatest sense of power and endurance to the singer or speaker, and is the most potent factor in success, as it builds and develops healthy activity of body, alertness of mind, and magnetic attraction in tone.

Many people teach breathing, but not all make their pupils realize the extent of its vital importance to the whole body: supplying added resistance to the pugilist, airy grace to the dancer, speed and endurance to the athlete, vigour of mind to the brain-worker, tireless voice to the speaker, and unbroken melody to the singer.

Cultivating my muscular breath-locking method sets free the whole personality to enhance the tone, making that personality magnetic, whether in song, oratory, or business discussion.

BREATH-CONTROL

You are thus able to project all your physical and spiritual self into the consciousness of your hearers.

Breath is Life, and you must learn to use all its vitality in your voice, in order to vivify the words to your audience.

The majority of people breathe incorrectly, though they started out in life fully endowed in infancy with the natural instinct of proper breathing, which any infant will demonstrate, viz., the out-and-in method that is Nature's own. You will not find any animal breathing otherwise.

The encouragement of the incorrect system of breathing with the upper part of the chest, by certain schools of singing and physical culture, has created wide-spread misconception.

The great diaphragmatic and abdominal muscles at the base of the lungs give the dynamic power of a natural bellows to the singer, along with control of the breath and graduation of tone; that is to say, breath support, and its economic and efficient management.

YOU CAN SING

Chest-breathing contracts the muscles of the throat, which suffer strain and fatigue thereby, whereas the upper part of the chest should be left free and relaxed, while the base of the lungs is filled with breath that is controlled and expelled by the great muscular power developed beneath.

The cultivation of the abdominal and diaphragmatic muscles to co-ordinate with, control and support the breath, does not distort the figure of even the most slender person, but has a tendency to reduce excessive fat by the internal massage given to the hips and abdomen.

This method of breathing has proved itself invaluable as a cure for tuberculosis of the lungs, and in bronchial troubles, in certain cases. One of my most successful singers came to study with me after being in Brompton Hospital, having had several hæmorrhages of the lungs. After a few years' study he is now not only restored to robust health, but has one of the biggest and best-produced voices among pupils I have trained and of whom I am justly proud.

After years of incorrect breathing, this deep

BREATH-CONTROL

breathing and "breath-lock" may be at first a little difficult, but it should not be so for long.

The most pernicious form of breathing is that known as clavicular or collar-bone breathing, which raises the collar-bone and shoulders, at the same time drawing in the abdomen and pushing its contents up against the diaphragm, which in turn is raised. The upper part of the lungs, which is the smaller, is used, and consequently only a minimum of breath is inhaled. In addition to this, the diaphragm being raised, there can be no expansion downward or outward.

A study of the anatomy of the chest will convince you that in this way a maximum amount of effort is used to obtain a minimum of breath, and many diseases of the respiratory organs may be directly traced to this method.

Louis Graveure (Wilfrid Douthitt), whose voice was developed by me, is very famous all over America, South Africa, and Germany, not only for the glorious quality of his voice, but also for his diction, enunciation and astonishing breath-control, which latter seems endless. He

YOU CAN SING

was sent to me by Caruso's throat specialist in London to study correctly, as he had a badly-congested throat from practising the elevated chest breathing.

After singing three words from a solo in the "Elijah", "It is enough", it seemed a literal fact, as his voice, owing to a congested throat, failed him utterly, and I hesitated to accept him as a pupil. However, he was so serious and anxious that I did give him lessons and finally took him into my own home in order personally to supervise his vocal development. For the first three months I kept him strictly to my method of deep breathing, teaching him the "breath-lock". Then followed four years of solid hard work, but the result brought him while still a pupil engagements at the greatest festivals of England, as well as at the Albert Hall and Queen's Hall Concerts and for the Tettrazzini tour. Since he went to America twelve years ago, Wilfred Douthitt, now known as Louis Graveure, has met with such sensational success that his native England knows him no more. His career is



IVOR NOVELLO

BREATH-CONTROL

worthy of citing, as his production and breathing were so faulty when he came to me that he seemed almost hopeless. Therefore the results are all the more gratifying to me, his teacher.

The breathing mechanism is so constructed that we may breathe either through the nose or the mouth, but it is a matter of vital importance which method we follow. One brings health and strength, the other disease and weakness. It should not be necessary for me to tell anyone that the proper method is to inhale through the nostrils with the mouth closed, but I am frequently astounded by the prevailing ignorance regarding this simple matter.

We find people in all walks of life falling into this error, and also permitting children to do so. As a child I was addicted to mouth-breathing, but my father wisely cured me in a short time by watching me while asleep and waking me whenever my lips were parted, making me realize the discomfort of being awakened merely to close them again. This, with a little patient vigil

YOU CAN SING

on his part, made me subconsciously correct the faulty habit.

Many contagious diseases are contracted by the habit of mouth-breathing, and Colds and Catarrhal affections are often attributable to the same cause.

The organs of respiration have their only protective filter in the nostrils, and when the breath is taken in through the mouth there is nothing to strain the air and catch the dust and other foreign substances which, though invisible, fill the surrounding atmosphere. From mouth to lungs the impurities have a clear track, and the entire respiratory system is unprotected.

Inflammation of these organs often results from the inhalation of cold air through the mouth at night. Have you never wakened with a parched and dry throat in the morning due to mouth-breathing? On the other hand, Nature has carefully designed the nose as a filter, lined with mucous membrane, with which the inhaled air comes in contact, and is warmed and purified

BREATH-CONTROL

so that it can do no damage to the delicate organs of the throat or lungs.

Few realize how much deep-breathing has to do with vitality, happy spirits and song, but it is a fact that birds, whose singing and joyousness we can only hope to imitate, not excel, are more richly equipped by Nature with breathing cavities than we are. I refer you to "The Outdoor World", by Fourneau (published by Longmans and Co.), which states that "Birds possess air cavities in different parts of their bodies which communicate with the air tubes of the lungs. Even their bones, or some of them, are hollow, containing air instead of marrow".

This book also bears out my theory that a singer's feet should be planted firmly on the floor, the toes seeming to cling thereto as a bird's to its perch, as if drawing vitality and support for the tone, when it states, under the heading "Our Perching Birds", that "All our best songsters belong to this group".

The student must learn to breathe deeply, as though by suction from the floor to the waist.

YOU CAN SING

This sensation braces the legs, intensifies the resistance of the abdominal muscles, relaxes the chest and throat, and, when all this is co-ordinated in the muscular breath-lock at the waistline, the result is breath-control rivalling that of the birds.

It is a common error to rise from the heels in straining upward for a high note, but the singer should remember that he is no lark with the weight of the atmosphere for resistance, and should seek rather to imitate the "Perching Birds" of whom it is said "All our best songsters belong to this group".

It is of primary importance that the student should build up the whole body, the singing instrument, by means of deep-breathing, in conjunction with physical exercises, before he attempts to make tone, just as the firm foundation of a building is necessary before erecting the walls and roof and adding the furnishings. It is not unusual for students to sing before the machinery of the body is ready and adjusted, and the result is poor production, shouting, and sometimes permanent breakdown. When you

BREATH-CONTROL

have complete control of the breath you can use it as you see fit in singing. You obtain freedom and power in expression, a marvellous, sustained tone, and are able to sing for hours without fatigue. My pupil, Sybil Vane, finished a three-hours' Recital in the Æolian Hall, New York, fresher than when she began, and with "*Je suis Titania*" as a final encore.

The breath-lock or control should be practised until it becomes the natural way of breathing. Rossini's dictum, "Voice, voice, and more voice", belongs to the forgotten past; to-day, and for the future, it will be "Breath, breath, and more breath".

Deep-breathing exercises are not only beneficial for voice, but they also vitalize the heart, lungs, and other internal organs, and give the student a full realization of robust health with which to meet the physical, emotional and mental strain of life. The greater oxygenation of the blood improves the circulation, nourishes the nervous system, helps elimination of waste, and overcomes lethargy and fatigue. The health-

YOU CAN SING

giving and curative value of this breathing is being proved to-day with most beneficial results in Brompton Hospital, London, where I had the great privilege of introducing it and organizing classes for the suffering inmates three years ago. Famous London and New York doctors and throat specialists have endorsed it, and after a detailed X-Ray examination of myself and a student, I had the pleasure of teaching it to several eminent physicians.

The "breath-lock" forms an automatic control and only allows a sufficient emission for the required tone, with no waste of breath. This makes for pure tone and avoids a breathy quality.

The muscles and breathing must be cultivated and co-ordinated even beyond the extent of their actual requirements for singing, as there should be a reserve store for the singer to draw from. They function more freely when there is a feeling of greater capacity if need be.

CHAPTER III

THE BREATH-LOCK

STAND erect, feet firm (and preferably bare in practice), toes curled inwards, as if gripping the floor. Keep finger-tips on diaphragm, just below the breast-bone, never removing them during the breathing practice on the "lock".

Exhale through open, pursed lips, so that as little breath remains in the lungs as possible, the abdomen sinking in as the breath goes out. Close the lips tightly, pouting as far forward as possible (this keeps the throat open). Then inhale deeply through the nostrils, sniffing the air. Imagine it coming by suction from the floor right through the tensed leg and body muscles to the diaphragm, where the sensation of "locking" is obtained by pushing out against the finger-tips with all the force of the diaphragmatic muscles, as if against

YOU CAN SING

great resistance; then relaxing the chest, as though "sitting on the breath".

This "locks" the breath. The locked breath feels to the touch like that of a large soft muscle in front of the diaphragm, right under the breast-bone, and should be gently beaten and tapped with the fingers to strengthen and harden it while the breath is retained. When "locking", take care not to push forward the lower part of the abdomen, which should be braced inwards to help the outward push from the diaphragm at the waist. When all the weight is thrown on the outward push of the muscles, be sure that the chest is thoroughly relaxed over them, to complete the lock, also that the throat remains free and unstrained, to form a funnel for the breath.

Apart from helping to build the physique and appearance so necessary to the concert and operatic stage, this control and economy of breath becomes through practice quite subconscious, and the diaphragmatic muscles readily "lock" and keep their forward pressure, the reservoir being

THE BREATH-LOCK

easily replenished from time to time with a quick intake of breath that is unnoticed. Some of the most successful artists I have trained have caused astonishment by the continuity of their breath-control and the greater ease in interpretation gained thereby.

CHAPTER IV

PRELIMINARY BREATHING EXERCISES

THE following exercises are preliminary to the Breath-locking Physicals, and give the student a sense of the action of the abdominal muscles in assisting to control the breath. They are also useful in awakening bodily and mental vigour, and give a feeling of exuberance for the more strenuous exercises which follow.

1 Place finger-tips on the waist-line in front. Inhale and exhale rapidly and evenly, panting in and out through the nostrils.

Jerk the muscles *out* against the finger-tips as you breathe in, and bounce them back as you breathe out. It is not unlike the action of a child sobbing or a dog panting, but the breath must go through the nostrils. All muscular movement should be at the front of the waist, beneath the breast-bone, and should be out and in, never up and down.

PRELIMINARY BREATHING EXERCISES

2 With hands held high over head, place one foot forward and bend until finger-tips touch the floor, if possible.

Inhale deeply through the nostrils while straightening the body up again, with arms lifted overhead as high as possible. Bend forward again, hissing out the breath through pursed lips, and as you touch the floor, or as near as possible, let go of any breath remaining, while relaxing and dropping the chin.

Inhale again deeply through nostrils while swinging body and arms upright.

Repeat from ten to twenty times daily, alternating right and left feet at every tenth breath.

3 Stand with feet and legs firm, elbows at waist, hands clenched. Inhale deeply through nostrils, pressing out the muscles at the waist and contracting the lower abdominal muscles beneath. As you hiss out the breath, push forward both clenched hands as far as they will go, and bring them back sharply again with elbows to waist at sides. Try to feel the outward pressure at the waist even when the breath is exhausted.

YOU CAN SING

4 Stand firm, with left foot forward and left hand on waist muscles at front, right elbow close to side, right hand clenched.

Inhale deeply, pressing out against left hand.

Hiss the breath slowly through pursed lips while you lunge the body forward and back from the waist, over the left foot, the right hand clenched and pushing forward in the same direction as if against a heavy object. Alternate all these movements with the right foot forward, the body and left hand lunging over it.

CHAPTER V

BREATH-LOCKING PHYSICALS

THE preceding exercises have given the student a sense of the frontal pressure necessary in "locking" or controlling the breath by the expansion and contraction of certain muscles at the base of the lungs.

The following exercises all include the "lock" and must be practised throughout with the breath firmly held at the front of the waist, beneath the breast-bone.

I The "Neck Roll", although the least strenuous perhaps, is of the utmost importance in keeping the throat flexible and free from strain.

Stand firm, with legs and body muscles braced upward to the waist. Inhale deeply, as shown, and "lock" by pressing out the muscles immediately beneath the breast-bone and relaxing the lower part of the chest over them. Hold fingertips against the "lock".

YOU CAN SING

Roll the head slowly round, three times to the right, three times to the left, and three times forward and back as far as possible, still holding the breath at the "lock". Release all the imprisoned breath with a whispered "Ha", the fingers sinking in with the relaxed diaphragm, to be pushed out again on inhaling as before.

Repeat three times.

2 The "Waist Roll" corresponds to the foregoing exercise, excepting that the body is rotated at the waist. The head must be held loosely as in the "Neck Roll".

Keep knees firm, and while retaining all breath, as in the manner shown, revolve the body gently round at the waist, with finger-tips of both hands held at the "lock".

Circle three times to right, three times to left, and three times forward and backward, holding the breath at the "lock" all through. Release breath to a whispered "Ha", inhale deeply, "lock", and repeat three times.

3 Inhale deeply and "lock".

Raise arms as high as possible above head, then

BREATH-LOCKING PHYSICALS

bend forward, knees stiff, and touch the floor, if possible, with finger-tips.

Straighten and repeat as often as possible on one imprisoned breath.

4 Stand firmly, heels together, arms hanging by sides.

Inhale deeply and "lock" breath.

Fling arms forward as far as possible, then backward, and, as they go back, bend the body forward above the waist, with a pressure outward on the "locking" muscles. Straighten up as the arms go forward and repeat alternately on these movements as long as you can on one "locked" breath.

5 Stand firmly, feet about eighteen inches apart, hands stretched out from sides.

Inhale, "lock", bend forward and touch the left foot with the right hand as you fling the left arm upward, knees braced back.

Straighten and repeat, reversing the arm movements and touching the opposite foot. Alternate as often as possible on one "locked" breath.

6 Stand firmly, feet together, body straight,

YOU CAN SING

arms at full length, palms pressed to sides of legs.

Inhale deeply, "lock" breath, and bend gradually to the left, knees stiff, palms still pressed hard on sides but sliding with the body's movement. Feel pull upward from right foot, without lifting foot off floor.

As the body inclines to the left, the left palm slides down to the knee or lower, while the right palm slides up to beneath the shoulder, the right arm being bent during the movement.

Reverse, without removing palms from body. As you straighten up and bend to the right, the right palm slides downward, and the left palm upward beneath the shoulder, and you feel pull on left leg muscles.

Repeat as often as possible on one "locked" breath.

7 This exercise is much the same as the foregoing, but the arms and hands are held out at the sides as you bend the body as far as possible to each side, trying, if possible, to touch the floor with the fingers, at each side bend. The knees

BREATH-LOCKING PHYSICALS

should not be bent during the movement. Repeat as often as possible on one "locked" breath.

8 Lie flat on a resisting surface, preferably a carpeted floor, with finger-tips on the breath-locking muscles.

Inhale deeply while raising body to a sitting position, keeping head and trunk still and in a straight line from the waist to the top of head.

Legs and feet must remain unmoved on floor, but, if undisciplined, hold feet down by placing them under a ledge of furniture.

The body must be raised by the abdominal and breath-locking muscles only, without help from elbows.

"Lock" breath when the body is in a sitting posture, and hold for a few moments, then expel gradually while resuming a lying position.

9 Lie flat on back, as in Exercise 8.

Inhale deeply while raising the left leg slowly, as high as possible, with knee unbent.

When at its highest, "lock" the breath and hold for a few moments, then allow the leg to

YOU CAN SING

gradually descend as you exhale. Repeat three times.

Raise the right leg, breathe in a similar manner, then lower leg while exhaling. Repeat three times.

Raise both legs together as high as possible, then "lock" as before, and exhale on descending. Repeat three times.

10 Sit on extreme edge of a chair.

Slump the body forward, with the arms hanging loosely before the legs, the whole being relaxed.

Inhale while drawing the body upright to a sitting position again, the whole movement being done on the action of the breath-locking muscles alone, their forward pressure raising the body automatically.

11 Stand firmly, heels together.

Inhale and "lock" breath.

Clasp right knee with both hands and pull it up towards the "locked" muscles, which should be firmly tensed outward. Fling right foot forward and down, and repeat with left knee.

BREATH-LOCKING PHYSICALS

Alternate as often as possible on one "locked" breath.

12 Stand firmly, feet apart.

Clasp the left hand in the right, thumbs interlocking. Hold the clasped hands about six inches out in front of the breath-locking muscles, with the bent elbows extended sideways. Raise them above the head by a series of eight jerks upward, and with each jerk take a sniff of breath in through the nostrils, so that with the eighth sniff and eighth jerk the hands are well overhead. "Lock" the breath when the hands are at their highest, and bring them down to the first position by a series of eight jerks done on the "locked" breath.

The arms should be tense all through the movements, and the breath-locking muscles should have a greater forward pressure at each jerk of the arms; the elbows should remain bent and extended sideways, the forearms being on a level with the hands.

The throat must always remain unstrained and loose.

CHAPTER VI

CONSONANTS AS AN AID TO FREE TONE

THE greatest lesson I ever received on the value of consonants in aiding, instead of interrupting, the flow of tone, and in bringing out the full meaning of words, was from the late Sir Henry Irving.

I shall never forget, and I often use personally as a demonstration, the manner in which he gave full emphasis and voice on the consonants in "I will have my bond", merely threading the vowels with continuity on the strong action of the lips and tip of the tongue, which seemed to draw their rich cargo of sound from his feet upward.

The body is, as I have said, the greatest of all musical instruments, creating sound by breath vibrations and amplifying it by resonators. The vowels vocalize this tone, but the consonants made by the work of the lips and tongue-tip provide the final and greatest service by placing the tone

CONSONANTS AS AID TO FREE TONE

up and forward, modifying, blending and moulding it into words. The more correctly consonants are enunciated and projected, the more perfect and beautiful is the released tone.

In vocal practice, if the consonants are exaggerated and prolonged, instead of holding on to the vowel sounds as is usually done, and the vowels are quickly threaded, not jerked on to the consonants, correct placement will inevitably result, as, although vowels can be, and too often are, produced by throat action, consonants can only be produced in a forward position.

The vowel sounds should be carefully drawn into the consonant placement, eliminating all throat muscular action and strain.

If the lips and tip of the tongue are exercised to a great degree of strength, they will eventually draw forth all the tone in the body, and the beauty of the purely-placed vowel sound is enhanced to an extraordinary degree and becomes expressive by being properly moulded and welded into the consonant, so that there is no audible division.

YOU CAN SING

No work could be more futile and injurious to the voice than the method of practising scales, etc., on vowel sounds only. Apart from wearing out the voice itself, instead of adjusting its mechanism, the expressionless hollow sound of "Ah", for instance, neither trains nor co-ordinates the mentality, muscularity, and personality so very necessary to the singer.

It is a favourite practice of aspiring vocalists to sing and yell scales to "Ah", until everyone in the vicinity is sorry for themselves and the would-be singer leaves off through exhaustion. On the other hand, in my studios have been a succession of students practising word-formation and vocal culture without a single neighbour or passer-by having cause for complaint.

Remember always that scales never could, and never will, *produce* voice, but are only an aid in mastering technique after the tone is built. I agree with Kreisler that skilful technique is the result more of mental than of physical practice. You may sing scales all your life and still retain

CONSONANTS AS AID TO FREE TONE

vocal blemishes until your adjustment is corrected.

Work the lips and tip of the tongue on the word formations given for their exercise. These should be practised also as toneless movements.

Louis Graveure, when studying with me in England as Wilfrid Douthitt, used to exercise his lips and tongue-tip for hours at a time, and this practice on consonants in no small measure earned the tribute of Professor Schmidt in the *Berliner Tageblatt* of 27th September, 1925: "In all that singing can demand, in technique and, above all, tone-building, he is for me the best living Concert Singer."

I cannot too strongly emphasize the value of consonants in bringing out the tone, and I am delighted to find such an eminent writer as Mr. St. John Ervine advocating recently what I have been applying to the voice, both in song and speech, for over forty years.

The mistaken idea of the greater value of vowels in practice is due to what is known as the

YOU CAN SING

Italian School of Singing, though a careful and able analysis of the singing of the greatest Italian artists, including Caruso, reveals the fact that they always stressed the consonants in which, opposed to popular belief, the Italian language abounds.

Adelina Patti, with whom I was intimately acquainted, and with whom I toured with several of my singers professionally, told me that she had naturally the Method I recommend, and I felt very happy to know that she was a natural exponent of all I sought to teach.

From the first, then, the student should practise on word formations. It is a profound mistake to attempt to build tone first and later on to add enunciation. You do not make tone first and then place the word on the tone in singing. It is the one process, and is so free and spontaneous with correct building that those who have studied longest and most seriously are rewarded by being complimented on their "natural beauty" of voice, thus revealing in them the "Art That Conceals Art".

CONSONANTS AS AID TO FREE TONE

Why does the human instrument make the greatest appeal of all instruments? Because it is the only mechanism that unites in Music all that Language can convey, and the words and music should be so united that one could not easily tell which is the "Better Half".

It is because the mechanism of true and beautiful singing is also that of speech that led me years ago to the discovery that anyone who can speak can also sing if they will learn and obey the mental and physical laws that govern the human instrument.

The lessons on word formations and the physical breathing exercises and "lock" have equal application to the cultivation of the *speaking* voice for public works, also the practice of exaggeration of consonants, to exercise the lips and tongue; and this method is a preventive and cure for what is known as "Clergyman's Throat".

Many leading members of the stage have studied with me for correct enunciation and

YOU CAN SING

the muscular "lock" on the breath, and have gained thereby the utmost endurance in their work.

I am frequently appalled at the imperfect enunciation on the stage and concert platform. I am not alone in trying to guess at a joke when some of the audience—usually a small percentage—are laughing, although the majority are neither lacking in a sense of hearing nor of humour. It is quite a usual thing in every place of entertainment to see others ask their neighbours for enlightenment on "that last word".

This slacking off, particularly at the end of spoken phrases, is due not only to inefficiency of the muscles that should support and control the breath, but to weak action of the lips and tongue, as, although the voice may be allowed to diminish for the sake of effect, both in singing and speaking, the enunciation should be heard, even on the merest whisper. I always ask my pupils to be most considerate of the almost-deaf person in the back seat of the gallery.

Remember to keep this phrase in mind always

CONSONANTS AS AID TO FREE TONE

in singing or speaking, "Lips, lips, lips, tip of the tongue". No exercise could be better than the repetition of it with the tongue prolonging the "l" sound in "lips" and threading on the remaining part of the word without break.

CHAPTER VII

EXERCISES FOR TONGUE AND LIPS

THE tip of the tongue is, to good speaking or singing, very much as the needle-point is to clear recording on the gramophone. If the tip of the tongue is used without putting any strain or pressure on the fleshy part, the nasal tone so objectionable in singing will be avoided and the enunciation will be more clearly delivered.

The Tongue

The following exercises will prove beneficial for the tongue-tip, concentrating all the attention on the extreme tip.

1 Press the tip of the tongue as tightly as possible against the roof of the mouth, then against the floor of the mouth. Repeat several times, holding the lips rigid and about one inch apart.

EXERCISES FOR TONGUE AND LIPS

2 Press the tip of the tongue from side to side of the mouth, using all the force possible.

3 Project the tongue as far forward as possible, straining it to its outward limit, then withdraw it quickly through the slightly-opened lips. As it is withdrawn into the mouth, turn the tip upwards against the roof of the mouth. Repeat twenty times daily.

The Lips

The following exercises will strengthen the muscular action and control of the lips :

1 Project the closed lips as far forward as possible, pouting them tightly together. Hold this position for a few seconds, then quickly open the lips slightly and draw back the corners of the mouth as far as possible, until the muscles beneath the ears and the upper part of the neck feel the strain. Force lips quickly forward to first position and hold it again for two or three seconds, then backwards as previously. Repeat these movements a few times.

YOU CAN SING

2 Press the lips together as tightly as possible, exerting all the power you can. At the same time hum lightly, opening and closing the tightened lips, and the sound becomes "Mum-mum-mum". Repeat about fifty times daily.

CHAPTER VIII

“NING” FOR VOICE-PLACEMENT

MANY centuries ago the Hindus thought that there were certain sounds which set up a rhythmic vibration and harmonious accord between mind and body in their utterance. Whatever truth there may be in this idea, I have found in my own experience very great value in the use of certain word formations in condensing the full bodily and mental powers to produce pure tone in its essence. The particular formation I have found of most advantage is the syllable “*Ning*”.

When working with my pupils I sedulously avoid technical terms and use simple illustrations. I tell them to drive the “*Ning*” sound upward against the top of the head, which vibrates to correctly-placed tone—to imagine the skull as the sounding-board of the voice, like the dome of a bell; and I have found in teaching that this simple language conveys my meaning successfully.

YOU CAN SING

The word "Ning" has the power of affecting the natural resonators to enhance the tone. It also relaxes the delicate muscles of the throat, the latter being treated as if it were merely a funnel through which to "shoot" the breath past the vocal cords which set into action the sound vibrations. This sound or tone is reinforced by the resonators of the head, as well as being regulated by the trained muscles controlling the breath.

The object of "Ning" is to make what I name "tone essence". The voice is not released in practising on "Ning", but is condensed and focused to the top of the head by the power of the breath compressed against the muscular action of the breath-lock, which sends the intensive "tone essence" into all the head resonators.

Just as a little soap goes a long way in the making of brilliant soap-bubbles, so does a little "tone essence" go a long way in the production of beautiful, sparkling tones when fully liberated. When the voice is ready to be released in full tone, it is effortless, pure and floating, not unlike

“NING” FOR VOICE-PLACEMENT

the principle of the soap-bubbles that float from the bowl of a pipe after being squeezed through the stem with all the concentrated force of one's breath. When a pupil develops every note and word with this “Ning” placement and principle, the tone is of necessity pure, and every note, from the highest to the lowest, is as evenly produced as a string of perfectly-matched pearls. There are no such things as “registers” and “breaks” in a voice produced by this method. All voices should be produced in the same manner and placement, whether the compass be high or low, as there is only one way to sing correctly, and that is Nature's own. The lowest note of the bass should be focused and projected in the same way as the highest note of the soprano, using every natural resonator. They are brought into use with “Ning”.

It is very desirable that the sound of “Ning” should be clearly understood. It is *not* an *open* sound, but the throat is not contracted in its production, which is controlled from the breath-locking muscles at the waist, under the breast-

YOU CAN SING

bone. If you inhale a deep breath and "lock" it as taught, then jerk the breath-locking muscles as you would a squeaking rubber doll, sending as if "shot" from there to the top of the head (so to speak), a compressed sound like the wail of an infant (and with the throat always easy), you will get the tone on which to place "Ning".

Pout the lips well forward when "Ninging", as in whistling, and almost closed. The student is urged to practise every word formation in all the lessons in the same placement as "Ning", and with the same intensive muscular breath-power directed towards the top of the head. This inward development of "tone essence", and the proper use of all the resonators, result finally in a voice that will carry in purity and power to the farthest end of a great auditorium.

CHAPTER IX

EXERCISES ON "NING" GROUP A

I INHALE deeply, as shown in the breath-locking exercises, and hold the chest and throat easy.

Pout the lips and start to "Ning" on A flat in the middle of your compass, counting two "Nings" per second and keeping on the one note as long as you can hold the breath. (See Figure 1.)

FIGURE 1.



Feel the "ng" hum pressing against the top of the head, and held there by the pressure of the breath-locking muscles instead of the throat.

With each breath, "locked", work upward another note until you have reached the natural

EXERCISES ON "NING" GROUP A

3 "Ning" on the intervals of thirds, in the key of A flat, beginning on the third note above A flat, which is C, and alternating it with A flat as often as possible on one "locked" breath. (See Figure 3.)

FIGURE 3.



4 This exercise on fourths is done precisely as all the foregoing, but starting on D flat and dropping to A flat, alternating as often as possible on one "locked" breath and keeping the same placement all through. (See Figure 4.)

FIGURE 4.



5 This exercise is on fifths, starting to "Ning" on E flat, then dropping to A flat, and

YOU CAN SING

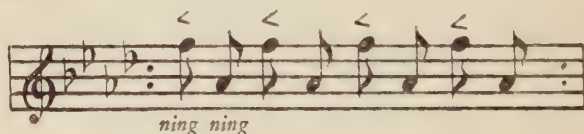
alternating as often as possible on one "locked" breath. (See Figure 5.)

FIGURE 5.



6 Sixths brings in the note higher, which is F. Alternate on F and A flat below, as often as possible on one "locked" breath. (See Figure 6.)

FIGURE 6.



7 A special effort must sometimes be made on the interval of sevenths, which seems to be the most difficult interval of all. Perhaps the psychological reason for this is that it is almost the octave, and the voice seems to wish to anticipate the finality of the completed scale. Therefore a greater effort is needed on the part of the mind

EXERCISES ON "NING" GROUP A

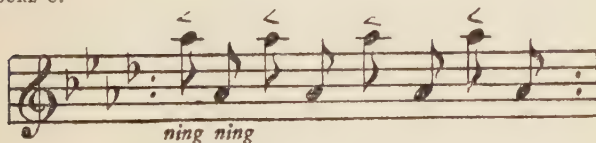
and the breath-locking muscles to "shoot" the upper "Ning" with correct placement on G and retain this placement while alternating on the lower A flat. (See Figure 7.)

FIGURE 7.



8 This exercise completes the scale of A flat in intervals. "Ning" first on the high A flat, shooting the tone well up, and then dropping down the octave, without slurring, to the lower A flat. As in all the foregoing exercises, keep on alternating on both notes until one "locked" breath is exhausted and keep the same placement all through. (See Figure 8.)

FIGURE 8.



All the foregoing exercises are timed at two

YOU CAN SING

“Nings” per second. When the scale of A flat is mastered, go through the higher scales of A, B flat, B, or as high as the natural limits of the voice, then go through the lower scales from A flat downward, but in no scale or note must the placement be altered, “Ning” always being “shot”, so to speak, from the breath-locking muscles to the very top of the head. The student will find the compass will expand rapidly at both extremities, provided the one focus and placement is maintained throughout, and the voice will develop and settle in its natural beauty of colour and quality, whether it be soprano, tenor, contralto, baritone, or bass, with no break or flaw from the highest note to the lowest, and of an even production throughout.

CHAPTER X

EXERCISES ON "NING" GROUP B

1 HAVING gone through the scales on the intervals, the student should now proceed to include each note between as follows: Begin as before on A flat in the middle of the compass, accenting the first note always and wherever marked throughout the exercises.

As in all exercises, a deep breath should be taken and "locked", and the exercise repeated as often as this breath holds.

This first exercise is on seconds, and in this case, and in all the group, the student starts on the key-note A flat. (See Figure 9.)

FIGURE 9.

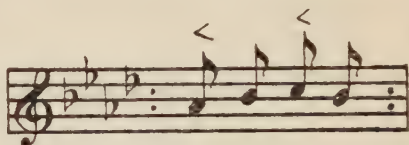


2 Thirds, starting on A flat, include B flat and C. Work these notes up and down as often

YOU CAN SING

as possible on one “locked” breath, accenting A flat and C, singing one “Ning” to each note. (See Figure 10.)

FIGURE 10.



3 Fourths include the higher note of D flat and are practised up and down with the accents on A flat and D flat. (See Figure 11.)

FIGURE 11.



4 In the intervals of fifths, which includes E flat, the “Ning” should be accented on A flat and E flat. (See Figure 12.)

FIGURE 12.



EXERCISES ON "NING" GROUP B

5 In sixths, which brings in F, the accent should still be on E flat and A flat. (*See Figure 13.*)

FIGURE 13.



6 Sevenths should be accented on the new note of G as well as on A flat. (*See Figure 14.*)

FIGURE 14.



7 The scale from A flat in the middle of the voice to the A flat above should be repeated very evenly up and down, and with great rapidity, in order to do as many repetitions as possible on one "locked" breath. Accent each A flat and dwell on them for twice the duration of the other notes. (*See Figure 15.*)

FIGURE 15.



CHAPTER XI

EXERCISES ON "NING" GROUP C

1 Starting on the key of C on the first line below the treble stave, "Ning" five notes up and down, from C to G and back, then the whole octave, with the note above, which is D, and down to the lower C again. Repeat this exercise as often as possible on one "locked" breath, placing the accents on C, G, and top D. (*See Figure 18.*)

FIGURE 18.

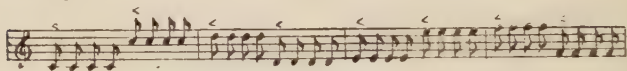


2 The second exercise of this group consists of jumping the octave and then proceeding a tone higher in the scale each time, before dropping an octave to the corresponding note below. Count four "Nings" per second and accent the first note of every four. Go through this exercise to the

YOU CAN SING

height of your compass. Do not slur in jumping the octaves, and take great care that the placement remains the same throughout. Do as many as possible on one "locked" breath. (See Figure 19.)

FIGURE 19.



3 Exercise three is similar to the preceding one, but the octaves are jumped half a tone at a time. Still count four “Nings” per second and accent the first of every four. (See Figure 20.)

FIGURE 20.



4 This exercise is the most helpful of all in producing even tone all through the voice, but should not be attempted until the foregoing are all mastered, as it requires perfect placement right through the slurred octave and back again, with absolute continuity. To be sure of the

EXERCISES ON “NING” GROUP C

placement, jump the octave twice to “Ding”, then take another deep breath and “lock” it. “Ning” quickly five times and continue the “ng” sound of the fifth “Ning” right down the octave and up again, then alternate with the note above as long as the “locked” breath holds. Slurring down and up, there must be an absolutely even compressed tone, like the wind softly sighing, but with all the force of the body concentrated in it. (See Figure 21.)

FIGURE 21.



CHAPTER XII

EXERCISES ON "NING" GROUP D

WHEN "Ning" is thoroughly mastered, and the student has gained the correct placement and sound of it, as previously explained, the following groups of word formations embodying the "ng" sound should be carefully gone through in practice, observing all the rules given in singing "ning". If properly done, they pull your whole being into the tone essence that vibrates on top of the head, and is afterwards liberated in pure song, when the student has gone through all its processes.

Series I

1 Begin in the middle part of the voice and work each group on one note at a time, repeating as long as one breath holds out. Continue up the compass to the highest limits of your voice, then downward to the lowest, one note

EXERCISES ON “NING” GROUP D

at a time, always giving the final “ng” sound an extra pressure from the breath-locking muscles.

“Ning-Neng-Nong-Noong”

Take every consonant of the Alphabet, and work the “ng” sound in the same way as before on every word formation :

Bing-Beng-Bong-Boong
Ding-Deng-Dong-Doong
Fing-Feng-Fong-Foong
Ging-Geng-Gong-Goong
Hing-Heng-Hong-Hoong
Jing-Jeng-Jong-Joong
King-Keng-Kong-Koong
Ling-Leng-Long-Loong
Ming-Meng-Mong-Moong
Ping-Peng-Pong-Poong
Quing-Queng-Quong-Quoong
Ring-Reng-Rong-Roong
Sing-Seng-Song-Soong
Ting-Teng-Tong-Toong
Ving-Veng-Vong-Voong
Wing-Weng-Wong-Woong
Ying-Yeng-Yong-Yoong
Zing-Zeng-Zong-Zoong

YOU CAN SING

Additional :

Sping-Speng-Spong-Spoong
Shing-Sheng-Shong-Shoong
Thing-Theng-Thong-Thoong
Swing-Sweng-Swong-Swoong

Series 2

2 In this series proceed as in Series 1, only substituting the heavier sound of “nj” instead of “ng”, making “ninj” rhyme with fringe, and prolonging its final hum on top of the head.

Binj-Benj-Bonj-Boonj
Dinj-Denj-Donj-Doonj
Finj-Fenj-Fonj-Foonj
Ginj-Genj-Gonj-Goonj
Hinj-Henj-Honj-Hoonj
Jinj-Jenj-Jonj-Joonj
Kinj-Kenj-Konj-Koonj
Linj-Lenj-Lonj-Loonj
Minj-Menj-Monj-Moonj
Ninj-Nenj-Nonj-Noonj
Pinj-Penj-Ponj-Poonj
Quinj-Quenj-Quonj-Quoonj
Rinj-Renj-Ronj-Roonj
Sinj-Senj-Sonj-Soonj
Tinj-Tenj-Tonj-Toonj

EXERCISES ON "NING" GROUP D

Vinj-Venj-Vonj-Voonj
Winj-Wenj-Wonj-Woonj
Yinj-Yenj-Yonj-Yoonj
Zinj-Zenj-Zonj-Zoonj

Additional :

Spinj-Spenj-Sponj-Spoonj
Stinj-Stenj-Stonj-Stoonj
Shinj-Shenj-Shonj-Shoonj
Swinj-Swenj-Swonj-Swoonj
Thinj-Thenj-Thonj-Thoonj

Series 3

This introduces "R" into the exercises. It should be rolled and prolonged in an exaggerated way in practice. The vowel sound should be quickly and almost imperceptibly threaded on, hurrying on to the "ng", this final sound also being prolonged and with a feeling that the outward pressure of the breath-locking muscles is sending the tone vibrating to the top of the head and supporting it there. The following gives an idea of how to practise on each word formation: Brrrringngngngng. Be sure to roll the "r" and prolong the "ng", as the value of these exercises consists in doing so.

YOU CAN SING

Bring-Breng-Brong-Broong
Dring-Dreng-Drong-Droong
Fring-Freng-Frong-Froong
Gring-Greng-Grong-Groong
Hring-Hreng-Hrong-Hroong
Jring-Jreng-Jrong-Jroong
Kring-Kreng-Krong-Kroong
Lring-Lreng-Lrong-Lroong
Mring-Mreng-Mrong-Mroong
Nring-Nreng-Nrong-Nroong
Pring-Preng-Prong-Proong
Qring-Qreng-Qrong-Qroong
Sring-Sreng-Srong-Sroong
Tring-Treng-Trong-Troong
Vring-Vreng-Vrong-Vroong
Wring-Wreng-Wrong-Wroong
Yring-Yreng-Yrong-Yroong
Zring-Zreng-Zrong-Zroong

Note.—Where the beginning consonant has tonal qualities and is singable, prolong it also, before adding the rolled “r”, and study its proper formation in the special exercises given on each.

Additional exercises :

Skring-Skreng-Skrong-Skroong
Spring-Spreng-Sprong-Sproong

EXERCISES ON “NING” GROUP D

Shring-Shreng-Shrong-Shroong
Thring-Threng-Throng-Throong

Series 4

Introduce “nj” instead of “ng” in this series, shooting the tone well to the top of the head and prolonging the hum there, with a feeling of support from the breath-locking muscles. Exaggerate all consonants. Roll “r” and weld the vowel sounds well on.

Brinj-Brenj-Bronj-Broonj
Drinj-Drenj-Dronj-Droonj
Frinj-Frenj-Fronj-Froonj
Grinj-Grenj-Gronj-Groonj
Hrinj-Hrenj-Hronj-Hroonj
Jrinj-Jrenj-Jronj-Jroonj
Krinj-Krenj-Kronj-Kroonj
Lrinj-Lrenj-Lronj-Lroonj
Mrinj-Mrenj-Mronj-Mroonj
Nrinj-Nrenj-Nronj-Nroonj
Prinj-Prenj-Pronj-Proonj
Qrinj-Qrenj-Qronj-Qroonj
Srinj-Srenj-Sronj-Sroonj
Trinj-Trenj-Tronj-Troonj
Vrinj-Vrenj-Vronj-Vroonj

YOU CAN SING

Wrinj-Wrenj-Wronj-Wroonj
Yrinj-Yrenj-Yronj-Yroonj
Zrinj-Zrenj-Zronj-Zroonj

Additional exercises :

Skrinj-Skrenj-Skronj-Skroonj
Sprinj-Sprenj-Spronj-Sproonj
Shrinj-Shrenj-Shronj-Shroonj
Thrinj-Threnj-Thronj-Throonj

Series 5

“L” must be featured and dwelt upon throughout the following exercises in this series. Learn how to form it correctly as in the chapter on “Consonants and their Word Formations”. Remember always that all exercises are to be seriously studied, and not just rapidly run through in a thoughtless manner. Exaggerate and prolong both the “l” and “ng” sounds, gliding the vowel on easily. By dwelling on “l” and keeping a forward pressure on the breath-locking muscles you will find that the vowel becomes properly placed and is ready to thread on without a break.

EXERCISES ON “NING” GROUP D

Go through the alphabet, as in the following :

Bling-Bleng-Blong-Bloong
Dling-Dleng-Dlong-Dloong
Fling-Fleng-Flong-Floong
Gling-Gleng-Glong-Gloong
Hling-Hleng-Hlong-Hloong
Jling-Jleng-Jlong-Jloong
Kling-Kleng-Klong-Kloong
Mling-Mleng-Mlong-Mloong
Nling-Nleng-Nlong-Nloong
Pling-Pleng-Plong-Ploong
Sling-Sleng-Slong-Sloong
Tling-Tleng-Tlong-Tloong
Vling-Vleng-Vlong-Vloong
Zling-Zleng-Zlong-Zloong

Additional :

Thling-Thleng-Thlong-Thloong

Series 6

This series combines “l” with the heavy sound “nj”, both sounds being dwelt upon as already shown. All former suggestions given for their correct production should be faithfully adhered to.

YOU CAN SING

Blinj-Blenj-Blonj-Bloonj
Dlinj-Dlenj-Dlonj-Dloonj
Flinj-Flenj-Flonj-Floonj
Glinj-Glenj-Glonj-Gloonj
Hlinj-Hlenj-Hlonj-Hloonj
Jlinj-Jlenj-Jlonj-Jloonj
Klinj-Klenj-Klonj-Kloonj
Mlinj-Mlenj-Mlonj-Mloonj
Nlinj-Nlenj-Nlonj-Nloonj
Plinj-Plenj-Plonj-Ploonj
Slinj-Slenj-Slonj-Sloonj
Tlinj-Tlenj-Tlonj-Tloonj
Vlinj-Vlenj-Vlonj-Vloonj
Wlinj-Wlenj-Wlonj-Wloonj
Ylinj-Ylenj-Ylonj-Yloonj
Zlinj-Zlenj-Zlonj-Zloonj

Additional :

Sklinj-Sklenj-Sklonj-Skloonj
Thlinj-Thlenj-Thlonj-Thloonj

CHAPTER XIII

DEGREES IN CRESCENDO AND DIMINUENDO

Series 7

THE accompanying chart of degrees in *crescendo* and *diminuendo* is of great importance and requires constant study and practice.

In the chart, it will be seen, are all degrees of tone, from the barely audible *pppp* to the strongest *ffff*, sung to "Ning", then by equal graduations back to *pppp*.

Start "Ning" on middle C, and with the breath-locking muscles tensed to support all tone from *pppp* to *ffff*, and taking care that the throat is free and unstrained, go carefully through each graduation of tone, being sure to keep an equality between each degree all the way through. Practise exercise *a* on one breath, and the same with *b*, then try to do exercise *c* carefully on one breath. (See Figure 22.)

YOU CAN SING

Do the same work with "Ning" on the next semi-tone higher, and so on throughout the limits of the compass.

Then take other words from the various groups previously given, such as Bing, Ling, Sing, etc., and work the same way on them. When you have mastered this on all the words given and throughout the range of your voice, then you can sing any word on any note, in any degree of strength, and the result is a voice under perfect control.

FIGURE 22.

a. *pppp ppp pp p mp mf f ff fff ffff*

b. *ffff fff ff f mf mp p pp ppp pppp*

c. *pppp ppp pp p mp mf f ff fff ffff fff ff f mf mp p pp ppp pppp*

CHAPTER XIV

EXERCISES ON CONSONANTS AND WORD FORMATIONS

THE student will find the following exercises on consonants and word formations invaluable for giving facility to the action of the lips and tip of the tongue.

The result of practising these will be clear enunciation and freedom of tone.

Students of singing should practise each formation and phrase on one note at a time, starting on the medium part of the voice and working upward, then right downward throughout the extent of the compass, "locking" the breath as in all other exercises. Speakers should learn to "lock" the breath also, and speak the word formations.

All the following exercises on consonants and word formations are to be practised with the sensation of drawing together all the bodily and mental forces, as taught, and with the same place-

YOU CAN SING

ment as "Ning", vibrating gently on top of the head in a compressed tone essence. The throat must never be allowed to tighten during any exercise.

It is a good plan to "Ning" a few times at first before singing a word formation.

There are seven word formations in each group, and in every case the last of the seven should be prolonged twice the duration of the others. Where the consonant carries tone with it, as L, M, N, V, Z, etc., the first and last consonants must always be prolonged, the vowel very short.

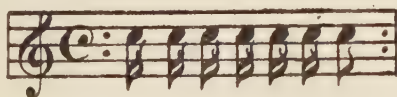
L

The consonant "l", when properly mastered and dwelt upon, adds so much to the expressiveness of many of the words it is embodied in. It is also a good exercise for the tip of the tongue, which should be curled upward and inward, and pressed against the front of the palate, just behind the upper teeth. The tone should vibrate on top of the head.

CONSONANTS AND WORD FORMATIONS

In the following words, be sure to dwell on the sound of “l”, then withdraw the tongue for just sufficient time to thread the vowel sound on to “l”, and in its placement. Completely merge the vowel into the first “l” and quickly carry it into the succeeding “l”, the vowel being so welded in between both consonants that there is no break whatever, the whole word vibrating on top of the head. Always prolong the last word of each line twice the time of the others. Take each line separately and carefully, then work through as many as you can on one “locked” breath. Keep the same placement as when working on “Ning”. (See Figure 23.)

FIGURE 23.



Lal-lal-lal-lal-lal-lal-lal
Lail-lail-lail-lail-lail-lail-lail
Lawl-lawl-lawl-lawl-lawl-lawl-lawl
Leel-leel-leel-leel-leel-leel-leel
Lul-lul-lul-lul-lul-lul-lul

YOU CAN SING

Loal-loal-loal-loal-loal-loal
Lool-lool-lool-lool-lool-lool

Lal-lail-lawl-leel-lul-loal-lool

M

If you will go through the consonants carefully, you will find that the letter “m” is one of the most useful in drawing the vowel tone right to the lips, after directing its humming sound into the head resonators.

“M” is made with the lips projected forward and well pinched together. The following vowel tone should be quickly blended in, and the whole word should vibrate on top of the head.

“M” should always be dwelt upon in practice, and the vowel drawn imperceptibly and carefully into it without any break, and preserving absolute continuity.

Practise the following group, line by line, then do all the lines on one “locked” breath,

CONSONANTS AND WORD FORMATIONS

going over each word as quickly as possible, and keeping each in the same placement as “Ning”.



Mam-mam-mam-mam-mam-mam-mam

Maim-maim-maim-maim-maim-maim-maim

Mawm-mawm-mawm-mawm-mawm-mawm-
mawm

Meem-meem-meem-meem-meem-meem-meem

Mum-mum-mum-mum-mum-mum-mum

Moam-moam-moam-moam-moam-moam-moam

Moom-moom-moom-moom-moom-moom-moom

Mam-maim-mawm-meem-mum-moam-moom

N

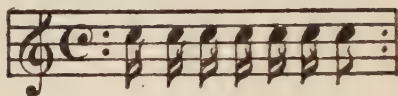
No consonant is more useful in pulling all the essentials of tone together and drawing this perfected tone out than the letter “n”.

“N” not only sends the tone humming all through the head resonators, but by the forward

YOU CAN SING

action of the lips also projects it well forward. Keep the placement of "Ning".

Practise as in the foregoing exercises :



Nan-nan-nan-nan-nan-nan-nan

Nain-nain-nain-nain-nain-nain-nain

Nawn-nawn-nawn-nawn-nawn-nawn-nawn

Neen-neen-neen-neen-neen-neen-neen

Nun-nun-nun-nun-nun-nun-nun

Noan-noan-noan-noan-noan-noan-noan

Noon-noon-noon-noon-noon-noon-noon

Nan-nain-nawn-neen-nun-noan-noon

R

For strengthening the tip of the tongue, trilling the consonant "r" will be found especially beneficial, also for sending the tone vibrating into the resonances of the head cavities. If you have great difficulty in trilling or rolling

CONSONANTS AND WORD FORMATIONS

“r”, it shows great need of practice, as the tongue is slovenly either for singing or proper speaking. Practise on two words, the first ending with “r” and the second commencing with “r”, such as “farther ranges”. This exercise may require much effort on the part of the tip of the tongue before it gains the required suppleness, but the result is worth all effort. “R” is made by very rapid vibrations set up between the extreme tip of the tongue and the front of the palate, behind the upper teeth. It should never be allowed to get backward and in the throat, as so often happens.

In trilling “r”, try to feel the connection of the breath-locking muscles on it, reinforcing the sound by jerking the muscles at the waist.

Go over each of the following lines slowly and carefully, then do as many as possible in one “locked” breath.



YOU CAN SING

Rar-rar-rar-rar-rar-rar-rar
Rair-rair-rair-rair-rair-rair-rair
Rawr-rawr-rawr-rawr-rawr-rawr-rawr
Reer-reer-reer-reer-reer-reer-reer
Rur-rur-rur-rur-rur-rur-rur
Roar-roar-roar-roar-roar-roar-roar
Roor-roor-roor-roor-roor-roor-roor
Rar-rair-rawr-reer-rur-roar-roor

TH

I have often to correct slovenly enunciation of the consonants "th", perhaps because they give the tongue more forward work than any others. "Th" has two distinctive sounds; heavy as in "then", "there", "mother", etc., and light and explosive as in "thin", "breath", etc.

In both instances "th" is formed while protruding the tongue and pressing the upper teeth down on it about a quarter of an inch from the tip, the tongue being quite relaxed along its length. The heavy sound "th" is sent humming into the head cavities as the teeth stem its emission, until the tongue is withdrawn to quickly thread on the vowel. The lighter

CONSONANTS AND WORD FORMATIONS

explosive “th” is made by merely blowing the breath slightly between the tongue and teeth pressure, and carries no tone with it, only the sound of the breath force, which should never be exaggerated.

Practise the following with the heavy sound at the beginning, and the light sound at the end of each word, then repeat with the light sound at the beginning and the heavy sound at the end :



Thath-thath-thath-thath-thath-thath-thath
 Thaith-thaith-thaith-thaith-thaith-thaith-thaith
 Thawth-thawth-thawth-thawth-thawth-thawth-
 thawth

Theeth-theeth-theeth-theeth-theeth-theeth-theeth
 Thuth-thuth-thuth-thuth-thuth-thuth-thuth
 Thoath-thoath-thoath-thoath-thoath-thoath-
 thoath

Thooth-thooth-thooth-thooth-thooth-thooth-
 thooth

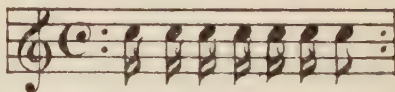
Thath-thaith-thawth-theeth-thuth-thoath-thooth

YOU CAN SING

P

Practising labial consonants of an explosive nature, such as p, b, etc., is most useful in strengthening the lip and mouth muscles, also in giving clear enunciation.

“P” is formed by pouting the lips together and forcing them apart with the emission of the following sound, or, as when it ends a word, by a small explosion of breath; the latter also taking place when “p” is contained within a word and is followed by another toneless consonant, as in tipsy, gipsy, etc. :



Prap-prap-prap-prap-prap-prap-prap
Praip-praip-praip-praip-praip-praip-praip
Prawp-prawp-prawp-prawp-prawp-prawp-prawp
Preep-preep-preep-preep-preep-preep-preep
Prup-prup-prup-prup-prup-prup-prup
Proap-proap-proap-proap-proap-proap-proap
Proop-proop-proop-proop-proop-proop-proop
Prap-praip-prawp-preep-prup-proap-proop

CONSONANTS AND WORD FORMATIONS

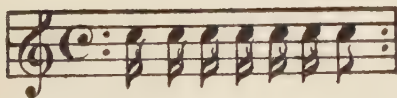
Plap-plap-plap-plap-plap-plap-plap
Plaip-plaip-plaip-plaip-plaip-plaip-plaip
Plawp-plawp-plawp-plawp-plawp-plawp-plawp
Pleep-pleep-pleep-pleep-pleep-pleep-pleep
Plup-plup-plup-plup-plup-plup-plup
Ploap-ploap-ploap-ploap-ploap-ploap-ploap
Ploop-ploop-ploop-ploop-ploop-ploop-ploop

Plap-plaip-plawp-pleep-plup-ploap-ploop

B

“B” is another labial formed and practised in a similar way to “p”, but with more stress on the pressure of the lips, also on the breath-locking muscles, and the sensation of connection between.

Practise as in all the foregoing :



Brab-brab-brab-brab-brab-brab-brab
Braib-braib-braib-braib-braib-braib-braib
Brawb-brawb-brawb-brawb-brawb-brawb-brawb
Breeb-breeb-breeb-breeb-breeb-breeb-breeb

YOU CAN SING

Brub-brub-brub-brub-brub-brub-brub
Broab-broab-broab-broab-broab-broab-broab
Broob-broob-broob-broob-broob-broob-broob

Brab-braib-brawb-breeb-brub-broab-broob

Blab-blab-blab-blab-blab-blab-blab
Blaib-blaib-blaib-blaib-blaib-blaib-blaib
Blawb-blawb-blawb-blawb-blawb-blawb-blawb
Bleeb-bleeb-bleeb-bleeb-bleeb-bleeb-bleeb
Blub-blub-blub-blub-blub-blub-blub
Bloab-bloab-bloab-bloab-bloab-bloab-bloab
Bloob-bloob-bloob-bloob-bloob-bloob-bloob

Blab-blaib-blawb-bleeb-blub-bloab-bloob

S

In the sibilant “s”, the breath is hissed against the upper teeth, between the tip of the tongue and the edge of the palate. Although unlike “z” it cannot be vocalized alone, it is very necessary to practise it in the following groups, so as to properly merge in the sound that follows, and

CONSONANTS AND WORD FORMATIONS

on the forward placement of “s”. Practise as in the foregoing exercises :



Slas-slas-slas-slas-slas-slas
 Slais-slais-slais-slais-slais-slais
 Slaws-slaws-slaws-slaws-slaws-slaws
 Slees-slees-slees-slees-slees-slees
 Slus-slus-slus-slus-slus-slus
 Sloas-sloas-sloas-sloas-sloas-sloas
 Sloos-sloos-sloos-sloos-sloos-sloos

Slas-slais-slaws-slees-slus-sloas-sloos

Skas-skas-skas-skas-skas-skas
 Skais-skais-skais-skais-skais-skais
 Skaws-skaws-skaws-skaws-skaws-skaws
 Skees-skees-skees-skees-skees-skees
 Skus-skus-skus-skus-skus-skus
 Skoas-skoas-skoas-skoas-skoas-skoas
 Skoos-skoos-skoos-skoos-skoos-skoos

Skas-skais-skaws-skees-skus-skoas-skoos

Swas-swas-swas-swas-swas-swas
 Swais-swais-swais-swais-swais-swais

YOU CAN SING

Swaws-swaws-swaws-swaws-swaws-swaws-swaws

Swees-swees-swees-swees-swees-swees-swees

Swus-swus-swus-swus-swus-swus-swus

Swoas-swoas-swoas-swoas-swoas-swoas-swoas

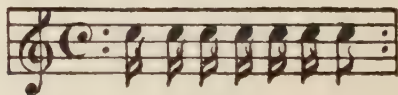
Swoos-swoos-swoos-swoos-swoos-swoos-swoos

Swas-swais-swaws-swees-swus-swoas-swoos

Z

Practice on “z” is good for all head resonance and frontal cavities. It should be worked with the lips almost closed and the upper part of the tongue nearest the tip buzzing against the edge of the palate, behind the upper front teeth. Thread the vowel sound carefully on as in all foregoing exercises.

Practise one line at a time, repeating as many as possible on one “locked” breath until you can accomplish them all.



CONSONANTS AND WORD FORMATIONS

Zaz-zaz-zaz-zaz-zaz-zaz-zaz

Zaiz-zaiz-zaiz-zaiz-zaiz-zaiz-zaiz

Zawz-zawz-zawz-zawz-zawz-zawz-zawz

Zeez-zeez-zeez-zeez-zeez-zeez-zeez

Zuz-zuz-zuz-zuz-zuz-zuz-zuz

Zoaz-zoaz-zoaz-zoaz-zoaz-zoaz-zoaz

Zooz-zooz-zooz-zooz-zooz-zooz-zooz

Zaz-zaiz-zawz-zeez-zuz-zoaz-zooz

F

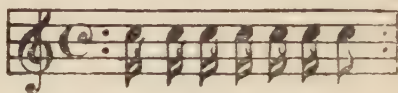
The value of practising “f” is that, although toneless in itself, it brings the muscles of the lips into play. It is so forward that, with the vowel or succeeding consonant welded on, there is bound to be perfectly produced tone and smooth phrasing.

As with other toneless consonants, there is all the more reason to practise combining them with singable consonants or vowel sounds. They are so well forward by lip and tongue action that there is an inclination to divide the consonant from the vowel which prefers to slip backward

YOU CAN SING

into the throat, unless drawn on to the strong action of the lips and tongue.

“F” is enunciated by pressing the upper front teeth against the outer edge of the lower lip, and throwing the force of the breath against their resistance.



Fra-fra-fra-fra-fra-fra-fra
 Frai-frai-frai-frai-frai-frai-frai
 Fraw-fraw-fraw-fraw-fraw-fraw-fraw
 Free-free-free-free-free-free-free
 Fruf-fruf-fruf-fruf-fruf-fruf-fruf
 Froaf-froaf-froaf-froaf-froaf-froaf-froaf
 Froof-froof-froof-froof-froof-froof-froof
 Frai-frai-fraw-free-fruf-froaf-froof
 Fla-f-la-f-la-f-la-f-la-f-la-f
 Flaif-flaif-flaif-flaif-flaif-flaif-flaif
 Flawf-flawf-flawf-flawf-flawf-flawf-flawf
 Fleef-fleef-fleef-fleef-fleef-fleef-fleef
 Fluf-fluf-fluf-fluf-fluf-fluf-fluf
 Floaf-floaf-floaf-floaf-floaf-floaf-floaf
 Floof-floof-floof-floof-floof-floof-floof
 Fla-f-laif-flawf-fleef-fluf-floaf-floof

CONSONANTS AND WORD FORMATIONS

V

“V” is one of the consonants on which a humming sound can be maintained, and in practice it is well to reinforce this tone by jerking the breath-“locking” muscles, especially in ending the tone.

The upper front teeth should protrude upon the lower lip, and remain lightly there for the duration of the consonant.



Vrav-vrav-vrav-vrav-vrav-vrav-vrav
 Vraiv-vraiv-vraiv-vraiv-vraiv-vraiv-vraiv
 Vrawv-vrawv-vrawv-vrawv-vrawv-vrawv-vrawv
 Vreev-vreev-vreev-vreev-vreev-vreev-vreev
 Vruv-vruv-vruv-vruv-vruv-vruv-vruv
 Vroav-vroav-vroav-vroav-vroav-vroav-vroav
 Vroov-vroov-vroov-vroov-vroov-vroov-vroov

Vrav-vraiv-vrawv-vreev-vruv-vroav-vroov

Vlav-vlav-vlav-vlav-vlav-vlav-vlav
 Vlaiv-vlaiv-vlaiv-vlaiv-vlaiv-vlaiv-vlaiv

YOU CAN SING

Vlawv-vlawv-vlawv-vlawv-vlawv-vlawv-vlawv

Vleev-vleev-vleev-vleev-vleev-vleev-vleev

Vlurv-vlurv-vlurv-vlurv-vlurv-vlurv-vlurv

Vloav-vloav-vloav-vloav-vloav-vloav-vloav

Vloov-vloov-vloov-vloov-vloov-vloov-vloov

Vlav-vlaiv-vlawv-vleev-vlurv-vloav-vloov

G

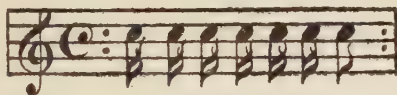
The consonant “g” is enunciated not quite so far forward as all the foregoing, and is made by thrusting the middle of the tongue against the palate, and removing it quickly, causing a small explosion of breath.

When “g” is final, there is merely the slightest percussion of breath between the tongue and palate, and this should be almost inaudible, or it will sound like an extra vowel, viz., “dog-eh”.

The same holds good with all similar and toneless consonants, such as k, p, b, t, d, etc., when ending a word, and the greatest aid in finishing correctly is to press outward on the

CONSONANTS AND WORD FORMATIONS

breath-locking muscles at the waist, and feel their influence on the consonant.



Grag-grag-grag-grag-grag-grag-grag
Graig-graig-graig-graig-graig-graig-graig
Grawg-grawg-grawg-grawg-grawg-grawg-grawg
Greeg-greeg-greeg-greeg-greeg-greeg-greeg
Grug-grug-grug-grug-grug-grug-grug
Groag-groag-groag-groag-groag-groag-groag
Groog-groog-groog-groog-groog-groog-groog

Grag-graig-grawg-greeg-grug-groag-groog

Glag-glag-glag-glag-glag-glag-glag
Glaig-glaig-glaig-glaig-glaig-glaig-glaig
Glawg-glawg-glawg-glawg-glawg-glawg-glawg
Gleeg-gleeg-gleeg-gleeg-gleeg-gleeg-gleeg
Glug-glug-glug-glug-glug-glug-glug
Gloag-gloag-gloag-gloag-gloag-gloag-gloag
Gloog-gloog-gloog-gloog-gloog-gloog-gloog

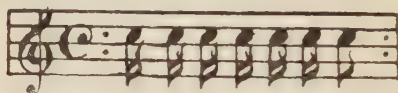
Glag-glaig-glawg-gleeg-glug-gloag-gloog

YOU CAN SING

K

The consonant “k” has the same position in the mouth as “g”, and its action is formed in the same manner, the only difference being that the sound is lighter.

Although the consonant is toneless, its clear articulation throws the succeeding vowel or consonant well up and forward, if it is correctly welded on. Practise the two following groups, one line at a time on each breath, then try to do as many as possible on one “locked” breath :



Krak-krak-krak-krak-krak-krak-krak

Kraik-kraik-kraik-kraik-kraik-kraik-kraik

Krawk-krawk-krawk-krawk-krawk-krawk-
krawk

Kreek-kreek-kreek-kreek-kreek-kreek-kreek

Kruk-kruk-kruk-kruk-kruk-kruk-kruk

Kroak-kroak-kroak-kroak-kroak-kroak-kroak

Krook-krook-krook-krook-krook-krook-krook

Krak-kraik-krawk-kreek-kruk-kroak-krook

CONSONANTS AND WORD FORMATIONS

Klak-klak-klak-klak-klak-klak-klak

Klaik-klaik-klaik-klaik-klaik-klaik-klaik

Klawk-klawk-klawk-klawk-klawk-klawk-klawk

Kleek-kleek-kleek-kleek-kleek-kleek-kleek

Kluk-kluk-kluk-kluk-kluk-kluk-kluk

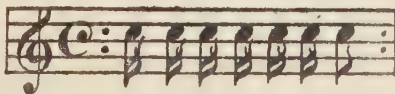
Kloak-kloak-kloak-kloak-kloak-kloak-kloak

Klook-klook-klook-klook-klook-klook-klook

Klak-klaik-klawk-kleek-kluk-kloak-klook

D

The consonant “d” is formed by the tip of the tongue being pressed against the front ridge between the upper teeth and palate, and its withdrawal for the emission of the sound which follows; or, in the case of final “d” by a small explosion of breath, almost inaudible, as the tongue is withdrawn so that it does not sound like “duh”.



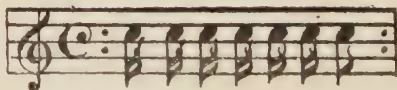
YOU CAN SING

Drad-drad-drad-drad-drad-drad-drad
Draid-draid-draid-draid-draid-draid-draid
Drawd-drawd-drawd-drawd-drawd-drawd-
drawd
Dreed-dreed-dreed-dreed-dreed-dreed-dreed
Drud-drud-drud-drud-drud-drud-drud
Droad-droad-droad-droad-droad-droad-droad
Drood-drood-drood-drood-drood-drood-drood

Drad-draid-drawd-dreed-drud-droad-drood

T

“T” sounds like a lighter form of “d”, and is formed by a similar tongue action, but is absolutely toneless. All such toneless consonants require practice so that they aid instead of interrupt the flow of tone.



Trat-trat-trat-trat-trat-trat-trat
Trait-trait-trait-trait-trait-trait-trait
Trawt trawt-trawt-trawt-trawt-trawt-trawt

CONSONANTS AND WORD FORMATIONS

Treet-treet-treet-treet-treet-treet-treet

Trut-trut-trut-trut-trut-trut-trut

Troat-troat-troat-troat-troat-troat-troat

Troot-troot-troot-troot-troot-troot-troot

Trat-trait-trawt-treet-trut-troat-troot

CHAPTER XV

THE METHOD APPLIED IN SONG-PRACTICE

It is taken for granted that the pupil has now become sufficiently familiar with the foregoing exercises to put their principles into practical use in studying songs.

Some years ago, I was fortunate enough to discover an ideal combination of words for practice in a poem called "Friend", and they inspired me to compose suitable music for them to make the song a special exercise to bring out not only correct tone and enunciation, but also the soul and confidence of the student in this description of the real, life-long friendship that almost everyone shares with someone.

The very word "Friend" lends itself so much to all that I teach in my method, as, usually, it is as difficult to sing the word perfectly as it is to be a perfect friend, but in both instances it is well worth the trouble.

THE METHOD APPLIED IN SONG-PRACTICE

The method of song-practice is as follows, and the student will readily learn to apply it to all songs while in the preparatory stage. Always realize that all exaggeration is finally toned down, but that its use in practice pulls forth the tone and gives correct enunciation. Then, when the voice is ready for liberation, it is an entirely pure, free, and floating tone, and carries your inmost emotions to the audience.

I always insist on my students knowing the notes and words of a song before going over it with me. The next step is the recitation of the words, with a mental concept of their inner meaning, ready for interpretation. Write the words of your song in a small note-book that you can easily carry with you for odd moments of memorizing. Be also note-perfect. Then begin your song in real earnest by taking a deep inhalation and "locking" the breath, being sure that the chest and throat are easy and relaxed.

Go right through the song, substituting "Ning" for each word, and keeping it on the

YOU CAN SING

same placement as always, gently vibrating on top of the head.

It is unnecessary in preliminary practice to keep strict time, as, for the sake of breath-control, it is good to see how much of the song you can get over quickly on one breath, but with a flowing continuity from "Ning" to "Ning".

This part of the study should be accepted for its invaluable aid to breath-control, which with experienced exponents of my method seems unlimited. It must not be neglected in the next stage when you practise on the words of the song. You will find by the time you come to sing the song as a finished study, that your breath-control will be remarkable.

The next step is to incorporate the words with the placement of "Ning" and its influence throughout. Let us take the word "friend", for I contend that such supposedly difficult words can easily be enunciated on the highest limits of the voice, instead of substituting "ah", as some singers do. The pupil already knows how to pronounce "fr", exaggerating the rolling of the

THE METHOD APPLIED IN SONG-PRACTICE

“r” as “frrrrrr”. The vowel sound “ie” must be threaded on to “fr” without a break in the continuity of tone, and carried quickly to “nd” by thrusting the tip of the tongue against the back of the upper teeth, prolonging the “n” sound before placing the “d” right on it. If you drop the tongue on a final “d”, it sounds like “duh”. I dare say you have noticed how words ending with a hard consonant are so often marred by the final sound of “uh”, so please do avoid it always by keeping the tip of the tongue pressed against the back of the upper teeth until all the tone in the final consonant is emitted.

Practise one word at a time as in the foregoing, then a whole phrase. Let us take “Oh, friend of mine,” interspersing “Nings” to be sure of proper placement, and with their influence on each word which must be strung on to the “Ning” with flowing continuity. Four “Nings” should precede each word, and the whole phrase should be sung on one breath. “Ning-ning-ning-ning-*Oh*-ning-ning-ning-ning-

YOU CAN SING

friend-ning-ning-ning-ning-of-ning-ning-ning-ning-mine."

Keep the lips almost closed, and pouted well forward. Don't try to make big tone; have your tone intensive, keeping the mind concentrated on placing each word on top of the head.

Keep on repeating the phrase as many times as possible on the one breath, then proceed to the next phrase, treating it in a similar manner until the whole song is gone through. The next step is to try how many phrases you can string together on one breath, always taking care to "Ning" between each phrase, keeping the placement, and exaggerating every consonant. Then follows phrasing without the "Ning", and in strict time, still singing as much as possible on one breath, and retaining the "Ning" influence.

When the student feels that he has mastered these exercises and has become saturated with the method of placement through the "Ning" and exaggeration of consonants, these invaluable aids to pure production may be mentally set aside, and enough will be subconsciously absorbed

THE METHOD APPLIED IN SONG-PRACTICE

to give himself and others the joyful sensation of free tone and correct enunciation. This entire freedom of voice enables the singer to give full scope in interpretation, and when everyone sings on this method, gone will be the book of words so necessary now at concert or opera. Throat specialists will no longer be required in the wings of the great opera houses to spray throats and so enable the artists to go through with the performance.

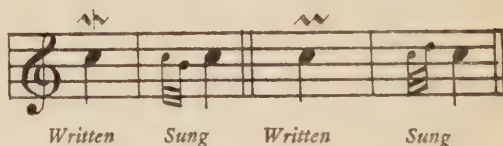
CHAPTER XVI

EMBELLISHMENTS

ALL embellishments should be practised on “Ning” until the voice is thoroughly placed; “Ning” also giving clarity and facility. The following shows the *Mordente* as written and as sung:

Mordente

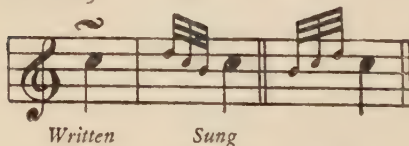
FIGURE 24.



The Gruppetto or Turn

Practise the various forms of the *Gruppetto* as sung, to “Ning”, and familiarize yourself mentally with them as written below:

FIGURE 25.



EMBELLISHMENTS

FIGURE 26.



FIGURE 27.



FIGURE 28.

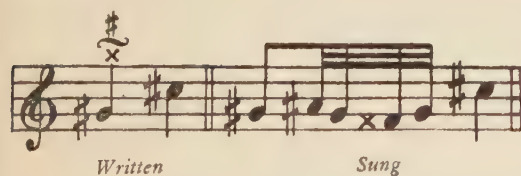


FIGURE 29.

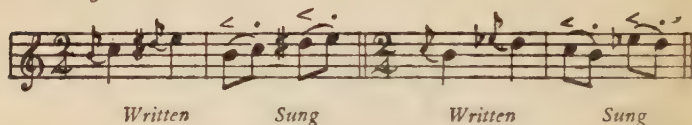


YOU CAN SING

The Appoggiatura

This is a Grace Note, taking the accent and half the value of the principal note. Practise to "Ning". (See Figure 30.)

FIGURE 30.



The Acciaccatura

A Grace Note crushed into the principal note, and having no accent. Practise to "Ning". (See Figure 31.)

FIGURE 31.



Portamento

Portamento means carrying the voice smoothly

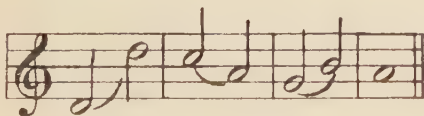
EMBELLISHMENTS

from one note to another note higher or lower, embracing all the subtle gradations of the notes between. Great care must be taken to avoid using the unmusical slur which is so commonly done in the name of *portamento*, the sort of “scooping” into one note from another that is the hall-mark of the ignorant singer.

Portamento should always be used very discreetly, and only where the music is so marked because expression is aided thereby.

The forward pressure of the breath-locking muscles should be evenly maintained throughout the *portamento* passage, so that the interval is carried smoothly and without a break. (See Figure 32.)

FIGURE 32.



Legato

Smoothness in singing is denoted by the term

YOU CAN SING

legato, which means an uninterrupted flow of tone from one note to another.

With my method of breath-control, this smooth flow can be retained even while a breath is being taken, because of the sustained pressure on the breath-locking muscles that support all tone.

Staccato

The extreme opposite of the *legato* flow in singing or playing is the *staccato*, with its clean-cut notes of the shortest possible duration and precision, as if the atmosphere were being rapidly stabbed or pricked with light and properly focused tones.

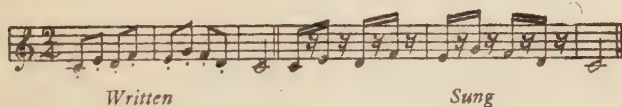
In *staccato* passages there must be no breathy quality; nothing but the quick emission of pure tone alternating with complete silence.

Practise the *staccato* exercises to "Ning" by putting the finger-tips on the breath-locking muscles, and firmly jerking the muscles at each

EMBELLISHMENTS

“Ning”. Learn to place “Ah” in the same way, for singing in public. (See Figure 33.)

FIGURE 33.



CHAPTER XVII

THE TRILL OR SHAKE

FIGURE 34.



THE above diagram shows how the trill or shake may be perfectly learned.

Take a metronome and set it at a very slow *tempo*—very nearly the lowest it is capable of registering.

Count each quarter-note or crochet to one beat of the metronome. With that as a permanent *tempo* value, “Ning” on group “a”, allowing one beat to each note, on group “b” one beat to two notes, on group “c” one beat to four notes, and on the final group “d” one beat to eight notes, always keeping strictly to the beat of the metronome.

Repeat from “a” to “d” until the thirty-second or demi-semi-quaver notes are easy to do at that *tempo*, and sustain the trill while the breath lasts.

THE TRILL OR SHAKE

“Ning” those groups through, slightly increasing the *tempo* of the metronome as soon as the “d” group becomes easy to do at the *tempo* you are working with. Continue to *moderato* on the metronome.

After going all through the groups on “Ning” to each note, repeat the exercise through with one “Ning” only to the group “a”, prolonging the final sound of “ng” in “Ning” throughout; then only one “Ning” to each four notes in groups “b” and “c”; and in group “d” one “Ning” to each eight notes, where the accent falls on the first of the eight.

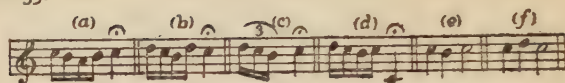
Repeat the whole exercise through from beginning to end on one “Ning”, prolonging the final “ng” sound throughout, and accenting correctly.

Finally, practise each group to “Ah”, keeping the correct placement and purity of “Ning”, which you can test by prolonging the “ng” sound at the end of “Ning”, and blending and merging it imperceptibly into “Ah” or any vowel sound.

YOU CAN SING

Endings

FIGURE 35.



Above are various endings of the trill, and the student should become familiar with all.

Practise to “Ning”, then practise each group to “Ah”, keeping the correct placement and purity of “Ning”.

CHAPTER XVIII

RECITATIVE

ONE of the greatest proofs of artistry in singing is to be able to sing recitative well, yet what is recitative but the union of song and speech! In recitative, the words retain the vocal quality of singing, with all the descriptive meaning and declamatory qualities of speech. It is reciting in singing tones the introduction to an aria or song; the delivering of a "prologue" that places the audience in a receptive mood for what follows.

There is no sustained melody throughout recitative, and the artist cannot rely on the accompaniment for support, as sometimes the chords, for the correct effect, must be played between the singer's notes, and not as written. Therefore, the singer of recitative must have musicianship and absolute confidence in his work.

The greatest care must be given to the consonants, if the words are to carry all of

YOU CAN SING

their inner meaning and rivet the attention of the audience, so the singer should consciously exaggerate the consonants with the lips and tip of the tongue. This will help to draw forth not only the tone, but the fullest meaning of the words.

What greater proof could there be of artistry in a baritone singer than to be able to deliver creditably and declaim the introductory recitative of "Elijah" in Mendelssohn's great oratorio of that name?

CHAPTER XIX

TONAL-PHYSICALS

ONLY when you have advanced so far in my method that you can “lock” the breath and control its emission; know how to do the various physical exercises; and are able to sing the “Ning” and other groups correctly, can you successfully combine all of them in this series which I have named “Tonal-Physicals”.

My object in so combining all the essentials for good singing has two reasons, the first being *economy of time* spent in practising, so as to enable business and other working students to do as much as possible in the limited time at their command; the second being that those exercises cannot be properly combined without pulling all the bodily essentials for pure tone into the voice, and eliminating all throat strain and fatigue.

“Tonal-Physicals”, in this present-day vogue for slimness of outline, are the surest and safest

YOU CAN SING

way to reduce all superfluous fat, instead of using questionable means that are dangerous to health. The exercises not only give a slender perfection of line and grace to the figure as the voice is developing, but also build up poise and personality.

In the old days the singer's physique was too stout, through a false conception of benefit to be gained through fat instead of muscle, and a sense of the ridiculous seemed to be lacking in artiste and audience alike when a song-bird weighing sixteen stone would warble: "Where the bee sucks, there lurk I." As my American friends would say: "It must have been *some* flower!"

Chests used to be stuck out or drawn up, thereby contracting the throat, and many good natural voices became worn out by constriction and wrong usage of the weak muscles of the throat, instead of the strong supporting muscles of the body.

The greatest singers of the past, Jenny Lind and Adelina Patti, were not stout, and present-

TONAL-PHYSICALS

day great singers such as Galli-Curci and Jeritza are slim and supple, and sing on muscle instead of fat.

“Tonal-Physicals” enable you to pull your muscular power into the tone, thus projecting in an increased resonance a physical and mental thrill from the very fibres of your being into the heart and soul of the listener.

Apart from building voice and figure, “Tonal-Physicals” are endorsed by leading medical men as a cure for many ailments, and doctors study them with me for their health value. They give the internal organs such a good inward massage that they function properly, thus giving buoyant health; and the deep-breathing which is controlled by the “lock”, and impelled upward into “Tone Essence”, gives not only health and voice, but happy spirits.

Deep-breathing has a remarkably stimulating effect upon the mind. Anyone can prove this within a few minutes. If you feel depressed, morbid, and out of sorts, take a dozen deep breaths (in the open-air for preference) and you

YOU CAN SING

will find your mental attitude has brightened. The brain and breathing system must be in close relationship and sympathy, or why does an anæsthetic affect the consciousness almost instantaneously, or deep-breathing in fresh air improve the mental as well as the physical well-being?

“Tonal-Physicals” ought to be the “Daily Dozen” of every member of the household, and any well-known tunes can be “Ninged” to the movements, and even nursery rhymes adapted for children.

All the following combinations of exercises must be done with the breath “locked”, and the throat and chest easy and unstrained. The body, from the breath-locking muscles at the waist and downward, should be braced firmly as a foundation to support the tone. The feet should cling firmly to the floor, with the legs pulling upward as if to part them from the ankles, this action helping to brace the lower abdominal muscles so as to aid in the outward pressure of the breath-lock at the waist. The voice during all

TONAL-PHYSICALS

exercises must never be an open singing tone, but "tone essence", a seemingly small though intensively concentrated tone gently vibrating on top of the head, and propelled there as if "shot" straight from the breath-lock.

TONAL-PHYSICALS

Exercise 1

Combine Exercise 1 of Preliminary Breathing Exercises with the exercise given for *staccato*. Instead of panting out and in as shown, "lock" the breath, and with the finger-tips held on the breath-locking muscles, jerk them out and in with a short disconnected "Ning" on each outward and inward movement.

YOU CAN SING

Exercise 2

Combine the "Neck Roll" in Breath-locking Physicals with exercises on "Ning" Group D, series I.

Start with "Ning-neng-nong-noong", slowly, doing "Ning" when the head drops forward; "Neng" as it revolves to the left; "Nong" as it hangs backward, and "Noong" as it revolves to the right. Work through any of the lines in this group, while slowly revolving the head as shown, and keeping the throat quite relaxed. Reverse the rotations every three times, and always do as many as possible on one "locked" breath. (See Figure 36.)

TONAL-PHYSICALS



FIGURE 36.

YOU CAN SING

Exercise 3

Combine the "Waist Roll" in Breath-locking Physicals with series 2 of the "Ning" exercises in Group D.

"Lock" the breath and begin with "Ninj" as the body bends forward, "Nenj" as it rotates to the left, "Nonj" as the backward movement is made, and "Noonj" as it rotates to the right.

Be careful to keep an outward pressure at the breath-locking muscles as you gently rotate the body. (See Figures 37 and 38.)

TONAL-PHYSICALS



FIGURE 37.



FIGURE 38.

Exercise 4

Combine Exercise 11 of the Breath-locking Physicals with "Ning" Group D, series 3.

Clasp the right knee with both hands and pull it up towards the breath-locking muscles as you inhale, then "lock" the breath and sing "Bring-breng-brong-broong" or any other words in this group, while jerking the knee against the breath-locking muscles at each word. Repeat as often as possible on one "locked" breath, then go through the same movements with the left knee. (See Figure 39.)

TONAL-PHYSICALS



FIGURE 39.

YOU CAN SING

Exercise 5

Combine Exercise 4 of the Preliminary Breathing Exercises (adding the breath-lock) with exercises on "Ning" Group D, series 4. Stand erect with right elbow at side, right hand clenched, left hand on breath-locking muscles, left foot extended, at an angle.

As you lunge the body forward over the left foot, and with the right hand clenched and pushing in the same direction, sing "Brinj" or any other word formations in this group, drawing the whole bodily force into the small "tone essence", and strongly accentuating the heavy sound of the final "nj" as you pull the body backward to the starting position. Alternate with the left hand clenched and lunging over the right foot. Sing also such words as "Frinjing, strinjing, krinjing, slinjing, klinjing, swinjing", etc., the first syllable loudly on the forward lunge, the "ing" as soft as possible, like an echo, on the pulling back of the body, and with no *diminuendo*, but suddenly soft. (See Figures 40 and 41.)

TONAL-PHYSICALS



FIGURE 40.



FIGURE 41.

YOU CAN SING

Exercise 6

Combine Exercise 6 of the Breath-locking Physicals with "Ning" Group D, series 6.

"Lock" the breath, and as you bend to the left side, your palms sliding with the body's movement, sing "Flinj" slowly and with the whole downward movement, then "Flenj" as you straighten the body; "Flonj" as you bend to the right side, and "Floonj" as you resume your first position. Repeat with other words in this group, then learn to do two words on the downward bend, and two as you straighten; and finally sing four words with each movement. Feel always that the whole body is being drawn into the "tone essence" as you sing, and vibrating on top of the head. (See Figure 42.)

TONAL-PHYSICALS



FIGURE 42.

YOU CAN SING

Exercise 7

Combine Exercise 3 of the Preliminary Breathing Exercises (but “locking” the breath) with all the exercises on intervals in “Ning” Group A.

Repeat each interval as often as possible on one “locked” breath, taking and “locking” a breath for each different exercise in this group. Do the two notes that form each interval on each movement of the arms, whether on the forward thrust or the backward pull. Go right through every interval in this way until you complete them with Exercise 8, where the octave is jumped.

Exercise 8

Combine Exercise 5 of the Breath-locking Physicals with the exercise on jumping the octaves in “Ning” Group C.

Stand with feet apart and arms extended sideways. “Lock” the breath, then go through the “Ning” exercise as given, while bending and

TONAL-PHYSICALS

touching one foot with the opposite hand, the other arm being thrown upward. Reverse the arm and foot alternately. Suit yourself as to time, but the "Ning" exercises should be sung quickly, and my students usually touch the foot at every eighth "Ning". (*See Figure 43.*)



FIGURE 43.

YOU CAN SING

Exercise 9

Combine Exercise 12 of the Breath-locking Physicals with the 9th exercise, embracing all the intervals in "Ning" Group B.

"Lock" the breath at the beginning of the exercise. Each of the eight upward and downward jerks with the clasped hands corresponds with different intervals in the scale, taken in order and according to the exercise on intervals. In the upward jerks the hands are well overhead at the last interval or octave. Then the hands should be jerked downward eight times in the same manner, with the descending intervals, until the exercise is completed. Remember to keep the arm muscles and breath-locking muscles tense all through the movements, and do not lift the chest or put any strain on the throat. (See Figures 44 and 45.)

TONAL-PHYSICALS

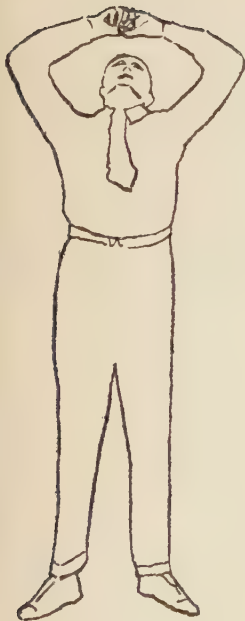


FIGURE 44.



FIGURE 45.

YOU CAN SING

Exercise 10

Combine Exercise 9 in Breath-locking Physicals with Exercise 4 in "Ning" Group B.

Lie flat on back and "lock" the breath before raising the left leg in five movements to the five notes as in the "Ning" exercise, having the leg at its highest point when on the fifth note, then allowing it to descend with the descending notes. Repeat as often as possible on one "locked" breath. Go through the same exercise with the right leg, and then with both legs together, repeating as often as possible on one "locked" breath.

Exercise 11

Combine Exercise 8 in Breath-locking Physicals with Exercise 1 in "Ning" Group C.

Lie on your back on the floor, preferably on a carpet or rug, with your feet under a ledge of furniture for resistance. "Lock" the breath, and while slowly raising the body to a sitting position without the aid of the arms or hands, "Ning"

TONAL-PHYSICALS

quickly up and down five notes, then up the octave and to a note higher. By this time the body should be in a sitting position, then "Ning" right down the scale while gradually resuming a lying position. Keep the fingers on the pressure of the breath-lock during the movements.

Exercise 12

Combine Exercise 3 in Breath-locking Physicals with Exercise 4 in "Ning" Group C.

"Lock" the breath, raise the arms with the hands held as high as possible, and sing "Ding"; then bend forward and touch the floor if possible, singing a second "Ding" when down, without slurring, and repeat, raising and bending to "Ding" two or three times.

Breathe again and "lock", then "Ning" quickly five times, and still on the "locked" breath and holding the final "ng" sound, bend forward to touch the floor if possible, pressing out on the breath-lock as you slide down the scale with an even slur, then straighten up with

YOU CAN SING

the upward slur of the "Ning" until the hands are stretched well overhead. Still on the "locked" breath, quickly alternate the starting note with the note above, accenting the latter and higher note by swaying the arms backward on it, and keep them swinging back and forth until the breath gives out. The same placement of tone must be retained all through the downward and upward slurring of the voice. Absolute evenness of tone results from this exercise. (*See Figure 46.*)

TONAL-PHYSICALS

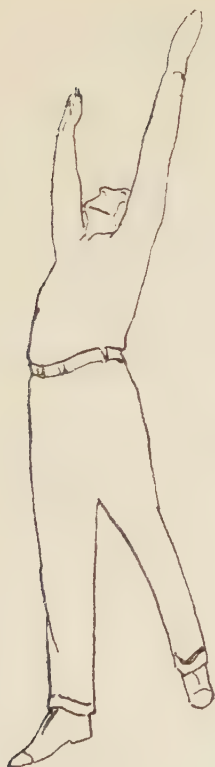


FIGURE 46.

CHAPTER XX

THE DAILY REGIME

ONE must have a system in serious study. The student who is preparing for a career, and is giving all his time to it, should make a schedule of the day's work, and adhere to it as a business man must when arranging and carrying out his daily routine.

7 a.m. Begin the day with a pleasant thought, even if the weather is bad.

Always sip a glass of hot water with a good dash of lemon in it. Whilst doing so go over in your mind what is to be your day's work, concentrating your whole personality on it. This is an excellent thing to do at a time when the brain is refreshed and plastic to impression.

7.30 a.m. Half an hour of physical breathing exercises at the open window.

8 a.m. Bathe in warm water, tempering to

THE DAILY REGIME

cold ere finishing with a brisk rub down. It is also advisable to splash the chest and throat with cold water to which has been added a handful of salt. Wash out the throat and mouth with a weak solution of salt in cold water, holding it in the throat for a few seconds, but do not gargle.

8.30 a.m. Breakfast.

9 a.m. Relax and read the morning papers, as it is very necessary for a singer to keep in touch with the affairs of the world and the topics of the day. If possible, stroll out to a quiet place in the park, where you can read undisturbed and enjoy the benefit of the fresh air.

10 a.m. Begin the day's work in real earnest, going over the vocal exercises on "Ning" and other word formations. Practise from the middle of the voice up, and then downward throughout the extent of the compass.

Keep the body braced tightly as far upward as the breath-locking muscles, but all above them must be easy and unstrained. Shoot all the body

YOU CAN SING

force gathered at the breath-lock right up into the seemingly small essence of tone you are making.

Relax completely for a few moments between exercises.

11 a.m. Practise piano for half an hour.

11.30 a.m. Go over songs, first to "Ning", then "Ninging", between words and phrases, to keep the placement. Study their interpretation and recite the words of all song studies.

12.30 p.m. Relax until lunch.

1 p.m. Lunch.

2 p.m. Walk in the open air.

2.30 p.m. Physical breathing exercises at open window, or if you have a private garden it is preferable to practise out in the open air.

2.50 p.m. Silent lip and tongue practice.

3 p.m. Half an hour's practice on "Ning" and other word formations, relaxing at times throughout.

3.30 p.m. Study of languages.

4.30 p.m. Study of arias and songs.

THE DAILY REGIME

6 p.m. Relax before dinner.

Form the habit of keeping a note-book handy and jotting down anything that appeals to you when reading or thinking.

In the evenings amuse yourself as befits your ambition, by attending concerts, plays, or operas, and train yourself to be a good listener, absorbing all that is constructive, and forgetting the mediocre and bad.

It goes without saying, that association with people who love and appreciate beauty, people of culture and gentleness, is always an inspiration and education.

Play golf or other physical games whenever the occasion offers, always "locking" the breath and seeing how long you can retain it.

I would also suggest a few mild physical exercises before retiring, but nothing strenuous or exciting.

Splash the throat and chest with a handful of salt in cold water before preparing for bed.

YOU CAN SING

Before going to sleep, study a book on concentration, or right thinking, or do a little of any other good reading, and last thing of all, concentrate on what you want to acquire and do for yourself, and others.

CHAPTER XXI

DIET

I DO not insist on certain foods for singers and banish others as pernicious. People are rather a nuisance at home or visiting, if they are afraid to eat anything edible that is properly cooked and set before them, and the physical exercises necessary for singing should keep anyone quite free from indigestion.

There are certain foods, of course, that are not only light but very nourishing.

Very little animal meat is necessary or desirable, but plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables, and salad in season.

I banish alcohol, as its effects are bad for the voice and physique in general.

Smoking is permissible, in moderation, as it soothes the nerves and acts as a disinfectant to the mouth and throat.

Be moderate always in the amount you

YOU CAN SING

consume; never eat or drink to repletion, and always leave off when you would like a second helping. Apart from being excellent for the health, this teaches self-control.

Never allow yourself to worry, as nothing upsets the digestion more than nervousness.

Diet your brain. Refuse to admit disturbing thoughts, and you can eat and sing what you like.

CHAPTER XXII

THE SINGER'S DEPORTMENT

IDEALLY, the audience should be wholly unconscious of the singer's appearance when listening to the song. The message is greater than the messenger. We do not notice a well-dressed person, but gaudy or dowdy clothes immediately attract our attention, unfavourably, hence a singer in good normal health and appearance, free from stupid mannerisms or queer clothing, presents the ideal platform appearance.

A gracious deportment is very necessary in entering, standing, and leaving the platform, also in bowing, as awkwardness draws too much attention of an uncomplimentary nature, and detracts from the enjoyment that even the most beautiful and soulful voice provides.

Some artistes have given poor performances, but have nevertheless won the audience by their gracious and easy deportment.

YOU CAN SING

Others have given excellent performances, but have created a poor impression because of ungainliness and awkward deportment.

Be a confident singer, not a "confidential" one, sharing your song with all, and not as a guilty secret with the first three rows in front.

Don't appear to be nervous, as it makes the audience vaguely uncomfortable and unreceptive of your song.

Nervousness is usually due to two causes, incompetence or self-conceit (which is the real definition of "self-consciousness").

You can't be nervous if your body and brain are competently controlled, and if you know your work.

You can't be nervous if you feel, as you should, that you have a beautiful message to give.

You can't be nervous if you "lock" your breath, as it automatically steadies every nerve and gives complete control.

You should breathe deeply and "lock" before making your entrance.

Walk slowly on at your ease, as if crossing a

THE SINGER'S DEPARTMENT

room at home to greet some friendly visitors, throwing out a feeling of love towards the audience.

Bow slowly, inclining the body forward from the waist, legs firm, right foot slightly forward (ladies); heels together (men), hands held loosely and naturally by the sides, or ladies may incline them slowly and gracefully outward, as when preparing to make a slight curtsy. To say mentally "Thank you" when bowing, develops graciousness and puts the singer at ease.

Have your whole mind focused on your song the moment the first bar of the introduction is being played.

Hold a joyous thought about the message you have trained yourself to express.

The hands, in singing, should never be awkwardly held. The best position is with the closed fingers of the right hand slightly curved round the closed fingers of the left, a little in front of the breath-locking muscles at the waist-line.

Remain motionless in the last mood of your

YOU CAN SING

song until the final note of the accompaniment dies away.

Bow a graceful and gracious acknowledgment of applause, again mentally saying "Thank you".

In going off, take a backward step or two, ere turning with easy grace and walking off in a natural manner.

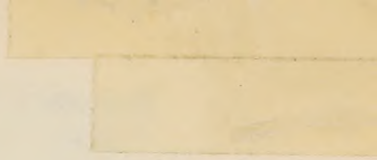
If the audience still applauds, come back and bow a couple of times, again mentally thanking them.

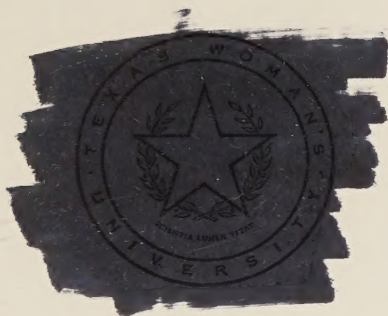
Never give an encore unless very sure that the audience desires it.

Always sing a favourite and well-known song as an encore, and choose a short, light one after a heavy song or aria, to make a contrast.

Sing everywhere you may, at first, to gain the experience that alone can give you ease and charm of manner and enable you to become *en rapport* with your audience.

THE END





LIBRARY

DENTON
TEXAS

